October 2011/33
Issues paper

This report is for information

This report describes the characteristics of starters to doctoral degree courses in UK higher education institutions between 1996-97 and 2009-10, and the attributes of their courses.

PhD study

Trends and profiles 1996-97 to 2009-10

HIGHER EDUCATION hefce FUNDING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND

Contents

PhD study: trends and profiles 1996-97 to 2009-10

To	Heads of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions
Of interest to those responsible for	Research, Student data, Planning, Postgraduate research
Reference	2011/**33**
Publication date	October 2011
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Executive summary

Purpose

1. This report describes the characteristics of starters to doctoral degree courses in UK higher education institutions between 1996-97 and 2009-10, and the attributes of their courses.

Key points

Overall trends in PhD starters

2. The analysis conducted considers changes over two periods: 1996-97 to 2009-10, the complete time series available; and 2007-08 to 2009-10, which gives an indication of recent trends and excludes the break in the time series between 2006-07 and 2007-08[1]. To allow us to use the most recent data for those students starting a doctorate by research course, students who started an MPhil and moved to a doctorate by research are excluded from this analysis.

3. Between 1996-97 and 2009-10, full-time PhD programmes had the biggest percentage increase in the number of starters: up 81 per cent from 9,990 to 18,075[2]. But between 2007-08 and 2009-10, the biggest percentage increase in the number of starters was to part-time PhD programmes: up 16 per cent from 4,070 to 4,715.

4. The numbers of PhD starters, to full- and part-time courses, from a UK domicile have seen the biggest percentage increases of any domicile group between 2007-08 and 2009-10, 21 and 17 per cent respectively. But between 1996-97 and 2009-10, there were larger percentage increases in students from outside the UK: for both EU (excluding UK) and international starters on full- and part-time courses.

[1] This break is a result of a change in the Higher Education Statistics Agency's data collection: it switched from collecting qualification aim to course aim data. See Annex A for further details.

[2] All starter numbers refer to the headcount of starters.

5. When considering trends in starters to particular subject areas, there were significant differences across the subjects. For example when considering starters to full-time courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, the number more than quadrupled in creative arts/design but remained broadly unchanged in veterinary sciences/agriculture.

Trends in PhD starters by student attributes

6. The largest percentage changes in the number of starters to full-time PhD programmes between 2007-08 and 2009-10 were seen for the following types of students:

- females (grew by 15 per cent) – in 2009-10 there were 8,135 female starters compared to 7,070 in 2007-08
- students aged 21 or under on commencement (grew by 23 per cent from 640 to 785)
- of UK-domiciled starters, those from a Black or Black British ethnicity (grew by 29 per cent from 165 to 215)
- students declaring a disability (grew by 36 per cent from 720 to 975)
- of UK-domiciled starters, those with a masters qualification in the year prior to commencement or a higher degree awarded two years or more before commencement (grew respectively by 38 per cent from 710 to 980 and 36 per cent from 2,045 to 2,775)
- of UK-domiciled starters, those with either an institution or the Government as their major source of funding for tuition fees (grew respectively by 55 per cent from 1,560 to 2,415 and 47 per cent from 450 to 665).

7. The largest percentage changes in the number of starters to part-time programmes between 2007-08 and 2009-10 were seen for the following types of students:

- males (grew by 16 per cent) – in 2009-10 there were 2,420 male starters compared to 2,080 in 2007-08
- students aged 24 or 25 on commencement (grew by 29 per cent from 185 to 235)
- of UK-domiciled starters, those from an Asian or Asian British ethnicity (grew by 38 per cent from 175 to 240)
- students declaring a disability (grew by 22 per cent from 200 to 240)
- of UK-domiciled starters, those with a higher degree awarded two years or more before commencement (grew by 37 per cent from 1,335 to 1,830)
- of UK-domiciled starters, those with the Government as their major source of funding for tuition fees (grew by 43 per cent from 175 to 250).

Action required

8. No action is required in response to this document.

Introduction

9. This report describes the characteristics of starters to doctoral degree courses in UK higher education institutions (HEIs) between 1996-97 and 2009-10. It follows on from the HEFCE publication 'PhD study: Trends and profiles, 1996-97 to 2004-05' (HEFCE 2009/04[3]).

10. The characteristics of these courses and students are described in three main sections:

a. The first examines the overall trends in starters to doctoral degree courses. It concentrates on the course's mode of study and subject area, and the domiciles of the starters to these courses.

b. The second examines the characteristics of the starters themselves. This section includes analysis of trends in students' sex, ethnicity, disability status and other characteristics.

c. The third section examines the main source of tuition fees for those starting doctoral degree courses.

Data sources

11. Data are drawn from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) individualised student records from 1995-96[4] through to 2009-10 (these data are collected annually for all students registered at a UK HEI). Since this analysis considers starters to PhD courses, it was necessary to check that students were genuine starters and not present on the same doctoral degree course in the previous year. Hence, the analysis used starting cohorts from 1996-97 to 2009-10.

12. We tracked individual student records within and through each annual student data set using a number of characteristics of the individual. The approach is similar to the one used in the HESA published higher education performance indicators for non-continuation rates[5].

Defining the population

13. There are technical difficulties in ensuring that all and only those students who are starting a doctoral degree course are included in our count. There are details of how this is achieved, and other aspects of the data definitions, in Annex A.

14. A brief summary of the initial cohort used is as follows:

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[3] All HEFCE publications are available in full at www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs.

[4] HESA records began in 1994-95, but we consider the records from 1995-96 for this analysis because the first collection was of poor quality.

[5] For further details, see Table T3 of 'Performance indicators in the UK 2008/09', available at www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/2072/141/ .

- registered at a UK HEI
- domiciled in the UK, EU or worldwide
- commenced a doctoral degree course in the year in question
- not on a doctoral degree course in the year prior to commencement at the same institution.

15. Having identified those students we believe are starting a doctoral degree course, there is a second group of students to be considered. Students who start an MPhil, in many cases, are actually intending to complete a doctoral degree. In such cases, their initial identification as an MPhil student may simply be the result of a formal decision by the institution. Alternatively, the student may only intend to complete an MPhil.

16. It is not possible to distinguish between the two outcomes of an MPhil student using a single HESA record. The identification of those starting on an MPhil and completing a PhD requires us to look forward two years for each MPhil student and see whether they become registered on a doctoral degree course. Therefore, the time series for students who started on an MPhil but moved to a doctorate by research is limited to starters from 1996-97 to 2007-08.

17. A change in the HESA collection, between 2006-07 and 2007-08, means that caution should be taken when making comparisons across these years. HESA moved from collecting qualification aim to course aim and a number of institutions have been identified as changing the way they return the initial aim of their postgraduate research students. See Annex A for further details.

18. Table 1 compares the number of starters to doctoral courses split by their initial qualification aim. The number of students who started on an MPhil but moved to a doctorate by research has remained fairly stable while the number of those who started on a doctorate by research has steadily increased.

Table 1 Number of starters split by level of initial qualification aim

Academic year	Doctorate by research	MPhil but moved to doctorate by research	Total starters	% of starters initially on MPhil
1996-97	14,045	4,590	18,635	25%
1997-98	13,330	4,810	18,145	27%
1998-99	13,440	4,720	18,160	26%
1999-2000	13,965	4,920	18,885	26%
2000-01	14,590	4,955	19,545	25%
2001-02	14,910	4,640	19,545	24%
2002-03	15,445	4,730	20,175	23%
2003-04	16,690	4,735	21,425	22%
2004-05	16,605	4,805	21,410	22%
2005-06	16,990	5,615	22,605	25%
2006-07	18,810	5,885	24,695	24%

2007-08	20,035	3,745	23,780	16%
2008-09	20,970	N/A	N/A	
2009-10	22,790	N/A	N/A	

19. Table 1 shows that students starting on an MPhil and transferring to a doctorate by research represented roughly a quarter of the total starters population between 1996-97 and 2006-07, and that this proportion decreased to 16 per cent in 2007-08. This report will present data for both populations by mode of study, however all further analysis will focus on those students starting and completing a doctorate by research.

20. For ease, the remainder of this report will refer to starters to doctoral degrees mainly by research as 'PhD starters' and those that move from MPhil to doctoral degree courses as 'MPhil to PhD starters'. Both starter populations could also include some specialist doctoral degrees, such as Doctor of Education (EdD) and Doctor of Engineering (EngD).

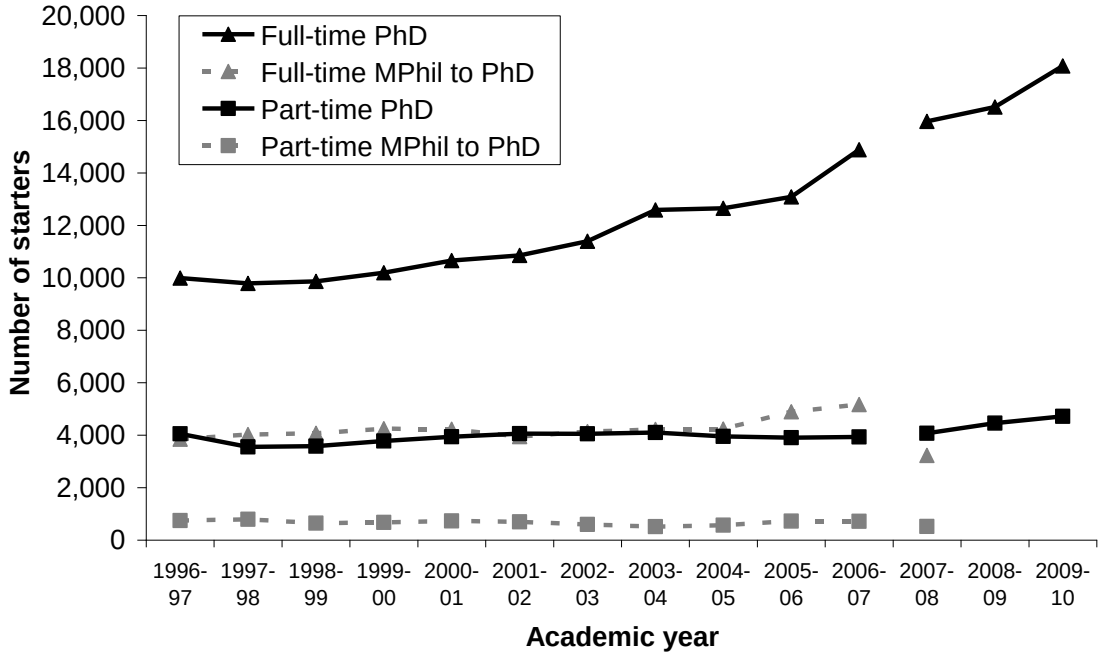
Overall trends in PhD starters

Mode on commencement

PhD starters and MPhil to PhD starters

21. Figure 1 shows the number of starters for both starter populations by full-time and part-time modes of study between 1996-97 and 2009-10. The change in behaviour of institutions between 2006-07 and 2007-08 is most noticeable for the full-time MPhil to PhD population.

Figure 1 Number of starters by mode of study and starter population



PhD starters

22. Table 2 shows the percentage change for the PhD starter population. The biggest growth in numbers between 1996-97 and 2009-10 was for full-time PhD starters, with a percentage increase of 81 per cent, from 9,990 to 18,075. However, between 2007-08 and 2009-10 part-time PhD starters have seen the biggest percentage increase at 16 per cent, from 4,070 to 4,715, after fairly stable numbers between 1996-97 and 2007-08.

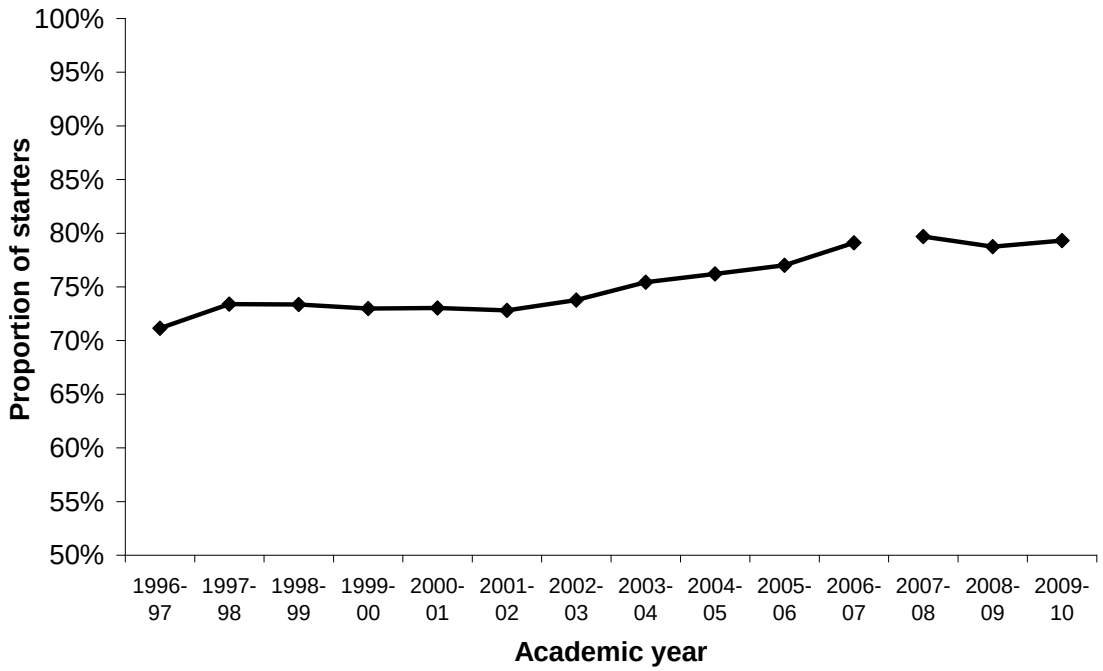
Table 2 Number of PhD starters split by mode of study

	Year			% Change	% Change
Mode	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	1996-97 to 2009-10	2007-08 to 2009-10
Full-time	9,990	15,965	18,075	81%	13%
Part-time	4,055	4,070	4,715	16%	16%
Total	14,045	20,035	22,790	62%	14%

Note: Percentage change for whole time series, 1996-97 to 2009-10, is calculated despite the known break in the time series. This allows the reader to compare recent trends with those seen over the entire data series, however the reader should note that the break in data could have affected this value.

23. Figure 2 shows the proportion in full-time study for the PhD starter population between 1996-97 and 2009-10.

Figure 2 Proportion of PhD starters on full-time courses



Note: Horizontal axis crosses the vertical axis at 50 per cent rather than 0 per cent.

24. Figure 2 shows that the proportion of PhD starters on full-time courses has steadily increased, from 71 per cent in 1996-97 to 79 per cent in 2009-10.

Domicile

Profile

25. Table 3 shows the percentages of full-time and part-time PhD starters by domicile in 2009-10.

Table 3 Full-time and part-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by domicile

Domicile	Full-time	Of PhD starters	Part-time	Of PhD starters	Total	Of PhD starters
UK	9,420	52%	3,615	77%	13,035	57%
EU*	2,550	14%	510	11%	3,060	13%
International	6,105	34%	590	12%	6,690	29%
Total	**18,075**	**100%**	**4,715**	**100%**	**22,790**	**100%**

* excludes those domiciled in the UK.

26. Table 3 shows that in 2009-10 the majority of PhD starters were UK-domiciled: half of the full-time starters and around three-quarters of the part-time starters were from a UK domicile. The table also shows that a significant proportion of PhD starters were from an international domicile (34 and 12 per cent for full- and part-time respectively).

Trend for PhD starters on a full-time course

27. Table 4 shows the number of starters on a full-time PhD by domicile in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10. It shows that the number of starters from a UK domicile increased by over 50 per cent between 1996-97 and 2009-10, whereas the number of starters from an EU or international domicile more than doubled. Conversely, the percentage increase between 2007-08 and 2009-10 was highest for starters from a UK domicile, at 21 per cent, and lowest for international starters, at 3 per cent.

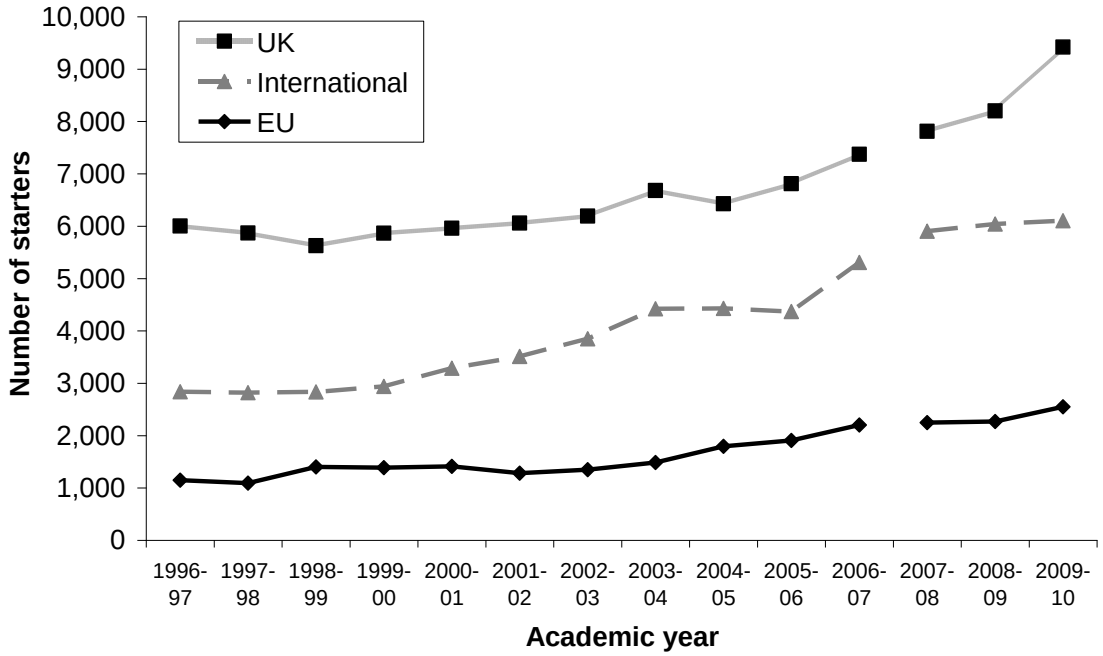
Table 4 PhD starters to full-time courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by domicile

Domicile	Year			% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10		
UK	6,005	7,815	9,420	57%	21%
EU*	1,150	2,245	2,550	122%	14%
International	2,840	5,905	6,105	115%	3%
Total	**9,990**	**15,965**	**18,075**	**81%**	**13%**

* excludes those domiciled in the UK.

28. Figure 3 displays the trend in full-time starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10 by domicile. It shows that much of the increase in UK-domiciled starters occurred between 2004-05 and 2009-10.

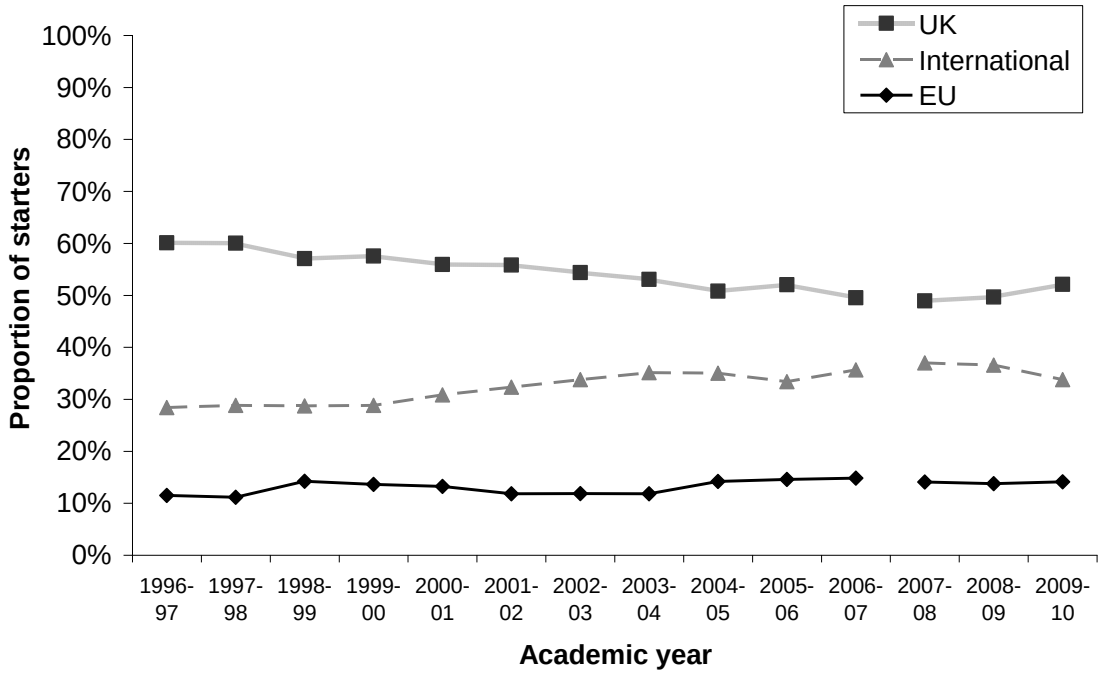
Figure 3 Number of PhD starters on a full-time course, by domicile



Note: EU category excludes those domiciled in the UK.

29. Figure 4 shows the trend in proportion of full-time starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10 by domicile. It shows that the proportion of PhD starters from a UK domicile was in steady decline between 1996-97 and 2006-07, from 60 per cent in 1996-97 to 50 per cent in 2006-07. However, between 2007-08 and 2009-10 it increased from 49 per cent to 52 per cent.

Figure 4 Proportion of PhD starters on a full-time course, by domicile



Note: EU category excludes those domiciled in the UK.

Trend for PhD starters on a part-time course

30. Table 5 shows the number of PhD starters to part-time courses by domicile in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10. As with the full-time PhD starters, UK-domiciled starters have the lowest percentage increase between 1996-97 and 2009-10, at 10 per cent, but have the highest increase between 2007-08 and 2009-10, at 17 per cent.

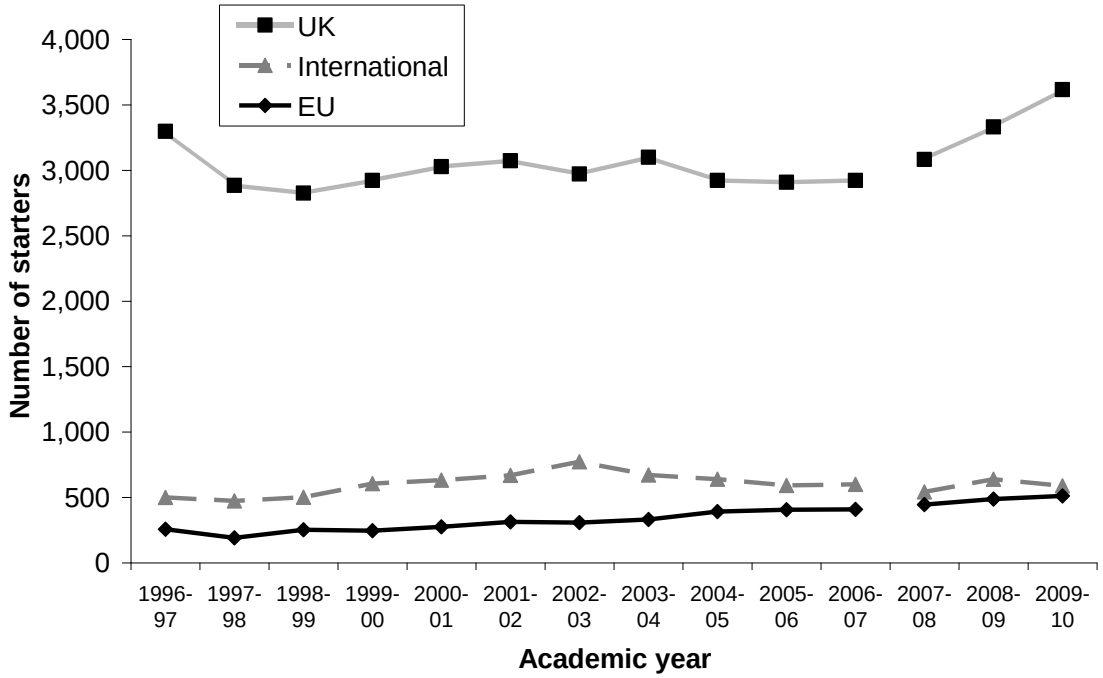
Table 5 PhD starters to part-time courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by domicile

	Year			% Change 1996-97	% Change 2007-08
Domicile	**1996-97**	**2007-08**	**2009-10**	**to 2009-10**	**to 2009-10**
UK	3,295	3,080	3,615	10%	17%
EU*	255	445	510	99%	15%
International	500	545	590	18%	8%
Total	**4,055**	**4,070**	**4,715**	**16%**	**16%**

* excludes those domiciled in the UK.

31. Figure 5 displays the number of part-time PhD starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10 by domicile. It shows that the number of part-time starters from the UK decreased between 1996-97 and 1998-99 and grew consistently between 2007-08 and 2009-10.

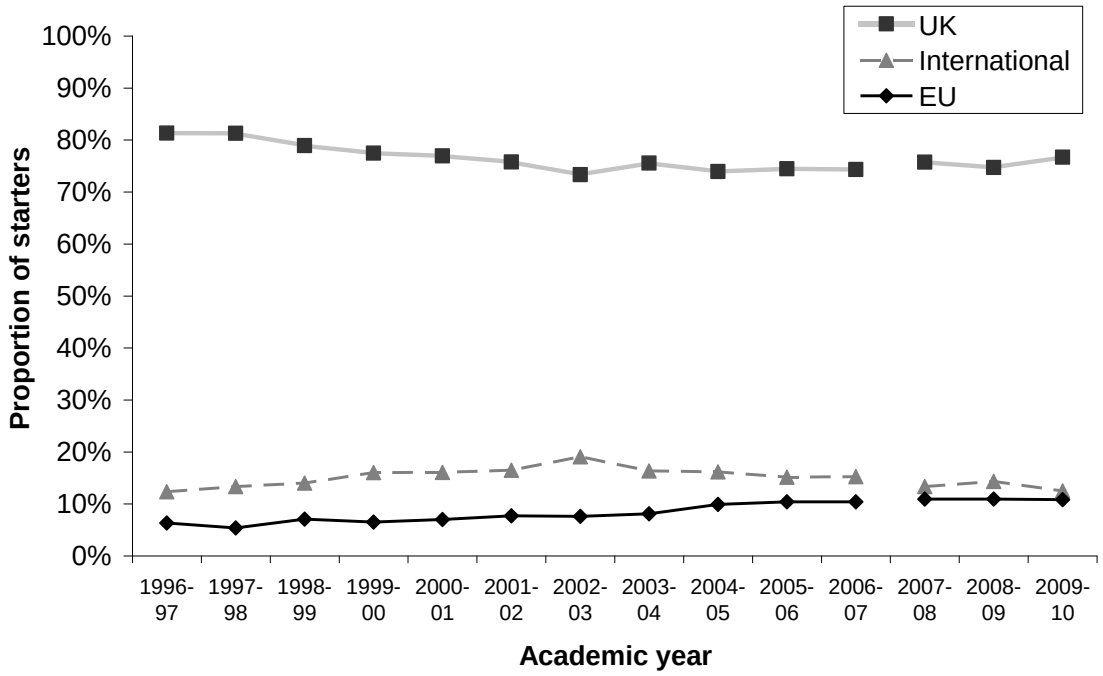
Figure 5 Number of PhD starters on a part-time course, by domicile



Note: EU category excludes those domiciled in the UK.

32. Figure 6 shows the proportion of part-time PhD starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10 by domicile. In comparison to the proportions in the full-time starter population (see Figure 4) the trend for part-time PhD starters is flatter over the time series and UK-domiciled starters hold a larger proportion of the part-time population.

Figure 6 Proportion of PhD starters on a part-time course, by domicile



Note: EU category excludes those domiciled in the UK.

Subject area

Profile

33. Table 6 shows the percentage of full-time and part-time PhD starters within each subject area in 2009-10.

Table 6 Full-time and part-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by subject area

Subject	Full-time	Of PhD starters	Part-time	Of PhD starters	Total	Of PhD starters
Medicine and dentistry	1,245	7%	535	11%	1,780	8%
Subjects allied to medicine	855	5%	430	9%	1,285	6%
Biological sciences	2,510	14%	355	8%	2,865	13%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	250	1%	30	1%	275	1%
Chemistry	1,025	6%	15	0%	1,040	5%
Physics	835	5%	15	0%	855	4%
Other physical sciences	805	4%	70	2%	880	4%
Mathematical sciences	520	3%	15	0%	535	2%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	965	5%	150	3%	1,115	5%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	3,035	17%	380	8%	3,415	15%
Social/political/economic studies	1,495	8%	390	8%	1,885	8%
Law	330	2%	80	2%	410	2%
Business/administrative studies	895	5%	450	10%	1,345	6%
Languages	1,015	6%	235	5%	1,250	5%
Humanities	940	5%	380	8%	1,320	6%
Creative arts/design	460	3%	185	4%	645	3%
Education	385	2%	910	19%	1,295	6%
Unknown and combined subjects	510	3%	90	2%	600	3%
Total	**18,075**	**100%**	**4,715**	**100%**	**22,790**	**100%**

Trend for PhD starters on a full-time course

34. Table 7 shows the trend for PhD starters to full-time courses by subject.

Table 7 Number of PhD starters to full-time courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by subject area

Subject	Year			% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10		
Medicine and dentistry	530	1,180	1,245	134%	5%
Subjects allied to medicine	405	790	855	111%	8%
Biological sciences	1,545	2,140	2,510	62%	17%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	245	225	250	1%	11%
Chemistry	875	945	1,025	17%	8%
Physics	425	735	835	96%	14%
Other physical sciences	375	685	805	116%	18%
Mathematical sciences	350	525	520	47%	-1%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	340	820	965	182%	18%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	1,775	2,590	3,035	71%	17%
Social/political/economic studies	825	1,445	1,495	81%	4%
Law	160	245	330	104%	35%
Business/administrative studies	390	770	895	129%	16%
Languages	670	890	1,015	52%	14%
Humanities	565	895	940	66%	5%
Creative arts/design	105	430	460	338%	7%
Education	235	330	385	63%	17%
Unknown and combined subjects	165	330	510	207%	54%
Total	**9,990**	**15,965**	**18,075**	**81%**	**13%**

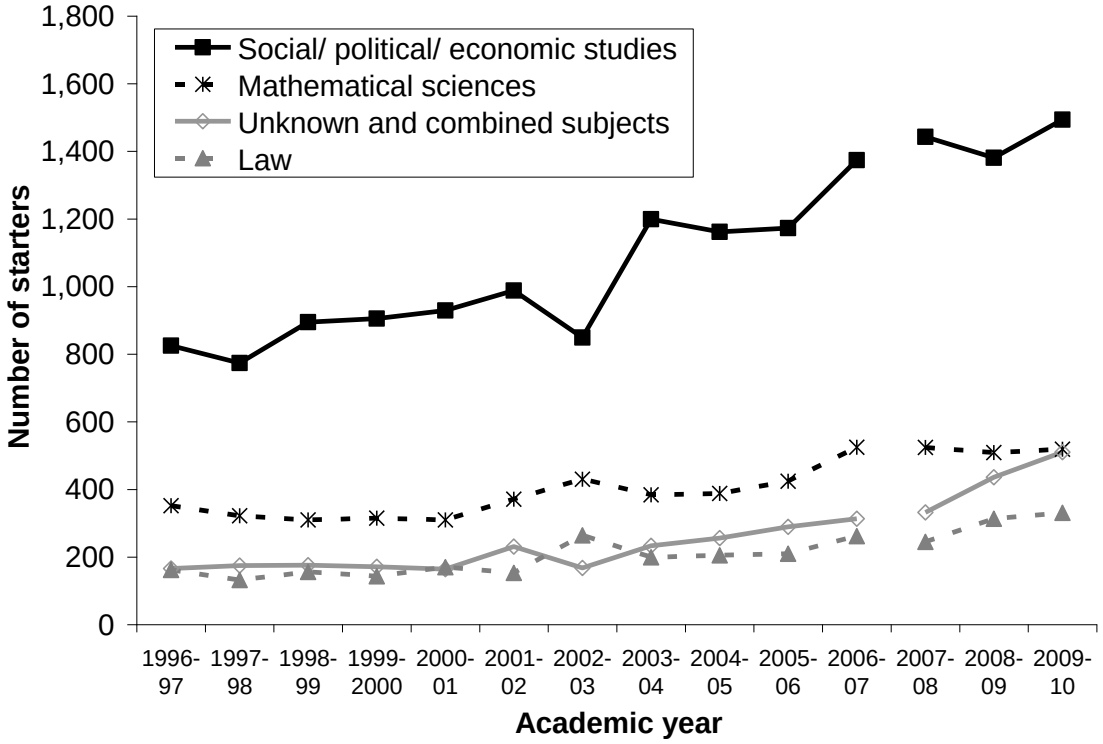
35. We see from Table 7 that for eight out of the 18 subjects the number of full-time PhD starters more than doubled between 1996-97 and 2009-10. However, categories such as Law and Creative arts/design initially had relatively low numbers of starters (less than 2 per cent of the population) and thus had relatively small increases in actual starters but relatively large increases in percentage terms.

36. Table 7 also shows that, more recently, the number of full-time PhD starters in Mathematical sciences decreased by 1 per cent between 2007-08 and 2009-10.

37. Figure 7 displays the trend in full-time PhD starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10 by the subjects that experienced either the largest proportional increases between 2007-08 and 2009-10 (Law, and Unknown and combined subjects) or the largest proportional decreases (Mathematical sciences and Social/political/economic studies). Further, for Unknown and combined subjects, the subject combinations with the biggest proportion of

starters in 2009-10 were Physical sciences combined with either Technology, Social sciences or Engineering.

Figure 7 Number of PhD starters on a full-time course for selected subjects



38. Table 8 shows the number of PhD starters to full-time PhD courses, split by subject area of study and the domicile of the starter in 2009-10. The percentage change relative to 2007-08 levels is given in the table; see Annex B for the percentage change between 1996-97 and 2009-10.

Table 8 Number of PhD starters to full-time courses in 2009-10, by subject area and domicile

	UK		EU		International	
Subject	**2009-10**	**% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10**	**2009-10**	**% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10**	**2009-10**	**% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10**
Medicine and dentistry	795	13%	155	-10%	300	-3%
Subjects allied to medicine	505	25%	95	-10%	250	-9%
Biological sciences	1,685	23%	355	16%	470	1%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	135	15%	25	#	85	18%
Chemistry	675	14%	130	-11%	220	7%
Physics	535	13%	150	14%	155	18%
Other physical sciences	515	24%	105	41%	185	-4%
Mathematical sciences	255	9%	95	-3%	170	-12%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	405	46%	155	33%	405	-5%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	1,265	27%	425	39%	1,345	4%
Social/political/economic studies	610	9%	260	4%	620	-2%
Law	110	61%	40	#	180	43%
Business/administrative studies	245	19%	105	14%	545	15%
Languages	510	21%	180	33%	325	-1%
Humanities	500	10%	115	4%	325	-3%
Creative arts/design	280	9%	60	20%	120	0%
Education	145	17%	40	#	205	18%
Unknown and combined subjects	255	74%	65	#	190	27%
Total	**9,420**	**21%**	**2,550**	**14%**	**6,105**	**3%**

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in one of the years and so percentage change is not reported.

39. Table 8 shows that there is variation from the overall trends when individual subject areas are considered. For example, there was an increase in the number of UK-domiciled PhD starters to Medicine and dentistry courses between 2007-08 and 2009-10 (13 per cent). However, the numbers of EU and international starters in this subject area dropped in the same period (declines of 10 per cent and 3 per cent respectively).

Trend for PhD starters on a part-time course

40. Table 9 shows the trend for PhD starters to part-time courses by subject.

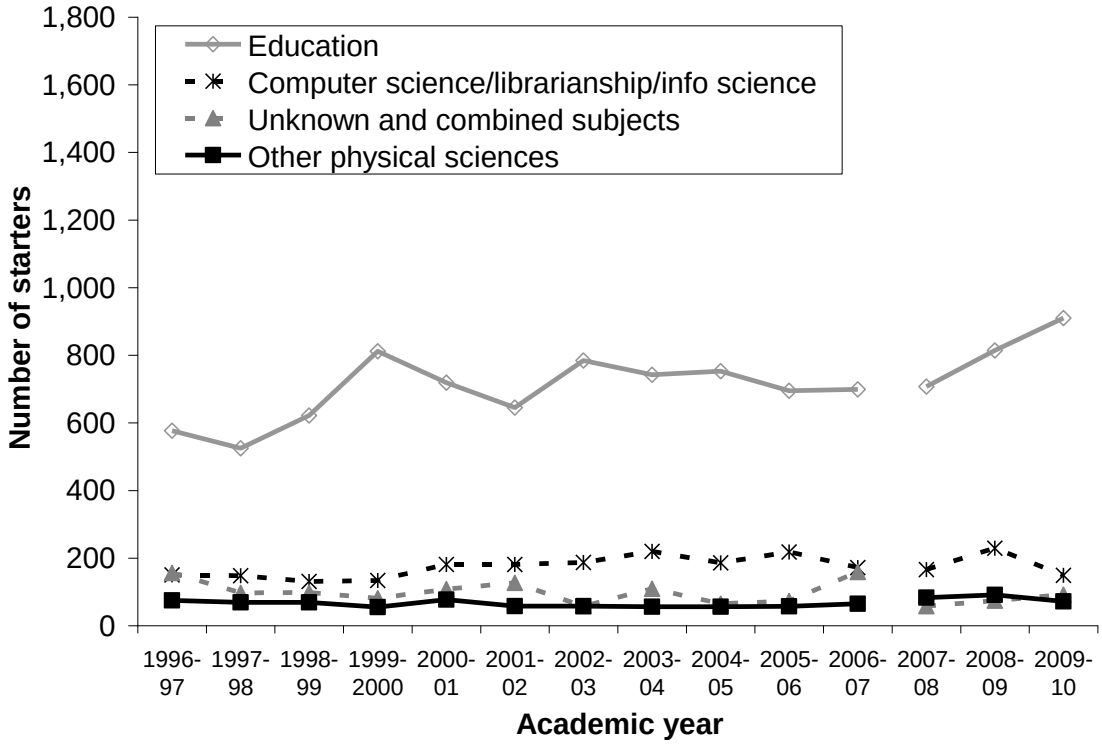
Table 9 Change in the number of part-time PhD starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by subject area

	Year			% Change	% Change
Subject	**1996-97**	**2007-08**	**2009-10**	**1996-97 to 2009-10**	**2007-08 to 2009-10**
Medicine and dentistry	450	450	535	19%	19%
Subjects allied to medicine	220	365	430	93%	18%
Biological sciences	335	370	355	6%	-4%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	50	25	30	-44%	12%
Chemistry	55	10	15	-72%	25%
Physics	50	20	15	-67%	-6%
Other physical sciences	75	85	70	-4%	-13%
Mathematical sciences	50	20	15	-67%	-19%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	150	165	150	-1%	-10%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	425	340	380	-11%	12%
Social/political/economic studies	450	325	390	-13%	21%
Law	70	65	80	13%	16%
Business/administrative studies	330	370	450	36%	22%
Languages	250	210	235	-7%	11%
Humanities	235	305	380	62%	24%
Creative arts/design	120	180	185	54%	3%
Education	575	705	910	58%	29%
Unknown and combined subjects	155	60	90	-41%	59%
Total	**4,055**	**4,070**	**4,715**	**16%**	**16%**

41. Table 9 shows that the overall percentage increase in numbers between 1996-97 and 2009-10 is 16 per cent which is the same as the percentage increase between 2007-08 and 2009-10, which suggests that much of the overall increase happened at the end of the period. Four subject areas saw consistent declines in both periods: Physics; Other physical sciences; Mathematical sciences; and Computer science/librarianship.

42. Figure 8 shows the trend in part-time PhD starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10 by the subject areas (excluding those with fewer than 50 students at the start or end of the period) that experienced either the largest proportional increases between 2007-08 and 2009-10 (Education and Unknown and combined subjects) or the largest proportional decreases (Computer science/librarianship/info science and Other physical sciences).

Figure 8 Number of starters on a part-time PhD course for selected subject areas



43. Due to small numbers the table examining starters to part-time PhD courses by subject area and domicile is not reported.

Trends in PhD starters by student attributes

Sex

Profile

44. Table 10 shows the number of full-time and part-time PhD starters by sex in 2009-10. It shows that the majority of PhD starters were male (55 per cent of full-time starters) in 2009-10. There was a higher percentage of female part-time starters (49 per cent) than female full-time starters (45 per cent) in the same year.

Table 10 Full-time and part-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by sex

Sex	Full-time	Of PhD starters	Part-time	Of PhD starters	Total	Of PhD starters
Female	8,135	45%	2,295	49%	10,430	46%
Male	9,940	55%	2,420	51%	12,360	54%
Total	**18,075**	**100%**	**4,715**	**100%**	**22,790**	**100%**

Trend for PhD starters on a full-time course

45. Table 11 shows the trend for starters to full-time PhD courses by sex.

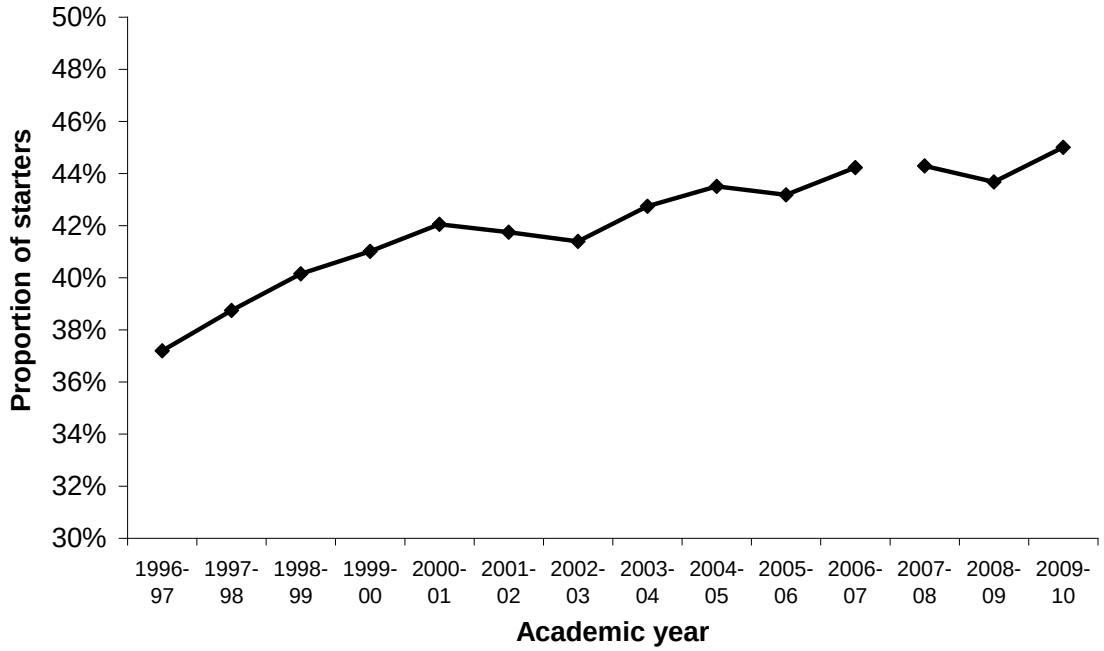
Table 11 Starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by sex

Sex	Year			% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10		
Female	3,715	7,070	8,135	119%	15%
Male	6,275	8,895	9,940	58%	12%
Total	**9,990**	**15,965**	**18,075**	**81%**	**13%**

46. We see from Table 11 that the number of female starters to full-time courses increased at a higher rate than for male starters for both periods considered (a 119 per cent rise for females compared to 58 per cent for males between 1996-97 and 2009-10 and 15 per cent compared to 12 per cent between 2007-08 and 2009-10).

47. Figure 9 displays the trend between 1996-97 and 2009-10 in the proportion of full-time PhD starters who were female.

Figure 9 Proportion of PhD starters to full-time courses who were female



Note: Horizontal axis crosses the vertical axis at 30 per cent rather than 0 per cent.

48. Figure 9 shows that the proportion of starters who were female has steadily increased from 37 per cent, in 1996-97, to 45 per cent, in 2009-10.

49. Table 12 shows the proportion of PhD starters to full-time courses in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 who were female, split by subject area. With the exception of Law and Creative arts/design, the proportion of female PhD starters increased in all subject areas over the period 1996-97 to 2009-10. However, between 2007-08 and 2009-10, six of the 18 subject areas saw the proportion of female PhD starters decrease.

50. The table also shows that the proportion of starters who were female varied widely by subject area. In 2009-10, 21 per cent of full-time PhD starters to Physics courses were female. This compares to 68 per cent in Education.

Table 12 Proportion of starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 who were female

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	52%	57%	59%	7%	2%
Subjects allied to medicine	61%	58%	60%	0%	3%
Biological sciences	51%	61%	62%	11%	1%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	40%	58%	60%	20%	2%
Chemistry	33%	41%	39%	6%	-3%

Physics	18%	25%	21%	3%	-4%
Other physical sciences	35%	46%	48%	13%	2%
Mathematical sciences	20%	33%	31%	11%	-2%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	18%	27%	25%	7%	-2%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	19%	23%	25%	6%	2%
Social/political/economic studies	40%	50%	54%	14%	3%
Law	43%	44%	42%	-1%	-3%
Business/administrative studies	33%	38%	43%	9%	4%
Languages	52%	60%	59%	7%	-1%
Humanities	39%	45%	46%	7%	0%
Creative arts/design	56%	50%	52%	-4%	2%
Education	59%	63%	68%	9%	5%
Unknown and combined subjects	36%	42%	44%	8%	2%
Total	**37%**	**44%**	**45%**	**8%**	**1%**

Trend for PhD starters on a part-time course

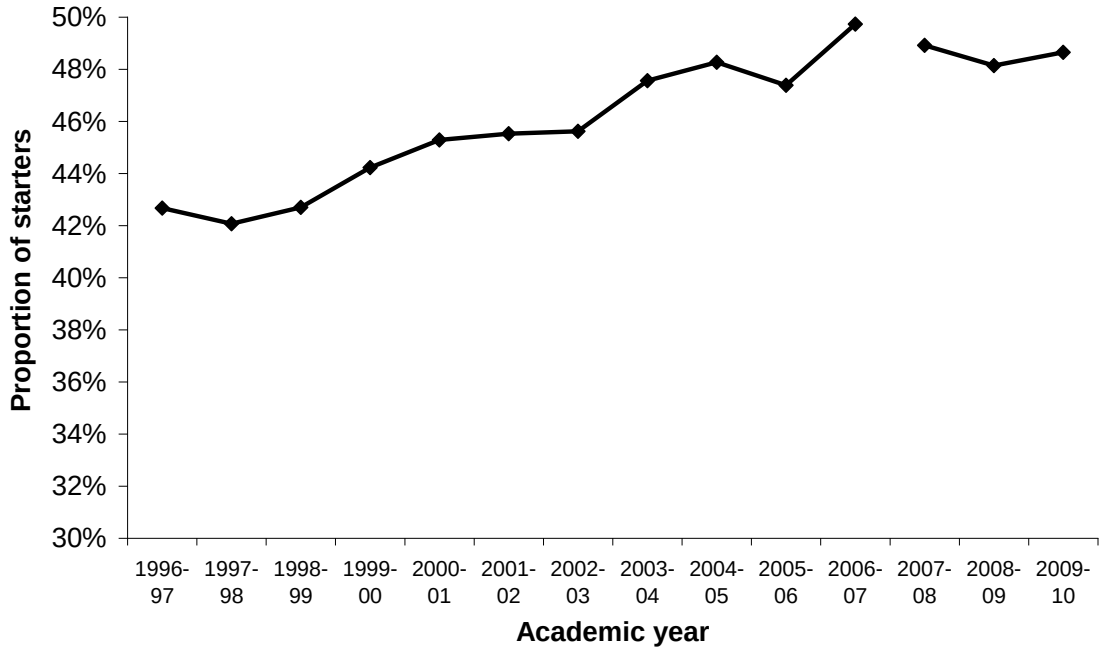
51. Table 13 shows the trend for starters to part-time PhD courses by sex. As was observed for full-time starters to PhD courses, the number of female starters increased, although to a lesser extent between 1996-97 and 2009-10 (33 per cent growth in part-time numbers compared to 119 per cent growth in full-time starters).

Table 13 Starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by sex

	Year			% Change	% Change
				1996-97 to	2007-08 to
Subject	**1996-97**	**2007-08**	**2009-10**	**2009-10**	**2009-10**
Female	1,730	1,990	2,295	33%	15%
Male	2,325	2,080	2,420	4%	16%
Total	**4,055**	**4,070**	**4,715**	**16%**	**16%**

52. Figure 10 displays the trend between 1996-97 and 2009-10 in the proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses who were female.

Figure 10 Proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses who were female



Note: Horizontal axis crosses the vertical axis at 30 per cent rather than 0 per cent.

53. Figure 10 shows that in 2006-07 the proportion of female PhD starters to part-time courses reached 50 per cent and between 2007-08 and 2009-10 the proportion remained above 48 per cent.

54. Table 14 shows the proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 who were female, by subject. The growth in this proportion is less variable than was observed for full-time starters; two subject areas saw no change in the proportion of female part-time starters for either period (Law and Languages).

Table 14 Proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 who are female

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	41%	50%	43%	2%	-7%
Subjects allied to medicine	58%	61%	59%	2%	-2%
Biological sciences	59%	64%	66%	7%	2%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	42%	64%	57%	15%	-7%
Chemistry	44%	25%	47%	2%	22%
Physics	19%	22%	24%	4%	1%
Other physical sciences	29%	40%	47%	18%	7%
Mathematical sciences	31%	48%	29%	-2%	-18%

Computer science/librarianship/info science	29%	30%	30%	1%	-1%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	14%	24%	23%	10%	-1%
Social/political/economic studies	50%	47%	54%	4%	7%
Law	46%	46%	46%	0%	0%
Business/administrative studies	31%	37%	37%	6%	0%
Languages	55%	55%	55%	0%	0%
Humanities	46%	44%	41%	-6%	-3%
Creative arts/design	46%	42%	50%	4%	8%
Education	51%	61%	60%	9%	-1%
Unknown and combined subjects	45%	53%	48%	3%	-6%
Total	**43%**	**49%**	**49%**	**6%**	**0%**

Age on commencement

Profile

55. Table 15 shows the percentage of full-time and part-time starters by age in 2009-10.

Table 15 Full-time and part-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by age

Age group	Full-time	Of PhD starters	Part-time	Of PhD starters	Total	Of PhD starters
21 and under	785	4%	10	0%	795	3%
22 or 23	4,830	27%	150	3%	4,980	22%
24 or 25	3,445	19%	235	5%	3,680	16%
26 or 27	2,415	13%	265	6%	2,680	12%
28 and over	6,595	36%	4,045	86%	10,640	47%
Total	**18,075**	**100%**	**4,705**	**100%**	**22,780**	**100%**
Mean age		**27.8**		**38.9**		**30.1**

56. Table 15 shows that the age profiles of full-time and part-time starters are very different. The majority of those starting on part-time PhD courses in 2009-10 were 28 or older (86 per cent of starters), whereas only 36 per cent of starters to full-time courses were in this age group.

Trend for PhD starters on a full-time course

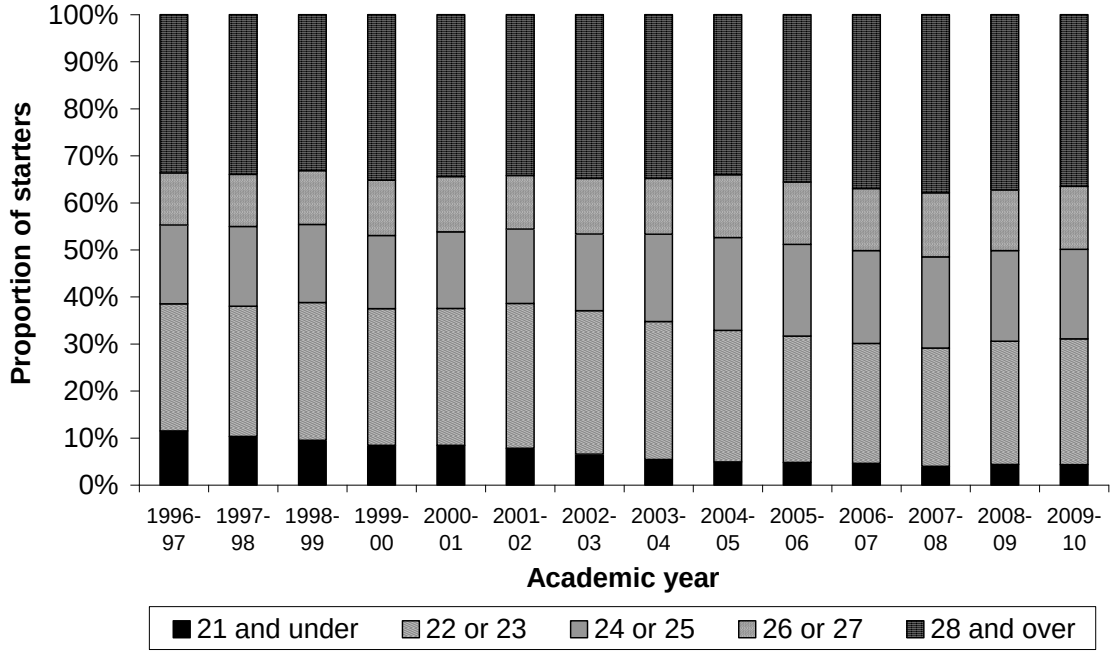
57. Table 16 shows the trend for starters to full-time PhD courses by age. It shows that the number of starters aged 21 and under dropped by 31 per cent over the period 1996-97 to 2009-10, however the number increased by 23 per cent over the period 2007-08 to 2009-10. The numbers in all other age groups increased in both periods considered.

Table 16 Starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by age group

	Year			% Change	% Change
				1996-97 to	2007-08 to
Age group	**1996-97**	**2007-08**	**2009-10**	**2009-10**	**2009-10**
21 and under	1,145	640	785	-31%	23%
22 or 23	2,695	4,005	4,830	79%	21%
24 or 25	1,670	3,095	3,445	106%	11%
26 or 27	1,105	2,175	2,415	119%	11%
28 and over	3,350	6,035	6,595	97%	9%
Total	**9,965**	**15,950**	**18,075**	**81%**	**13%**
Mean age	**27.1**	**28.0**	**27.8**		

58. Figure 11 displays the trend in the age distribution of full-time starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10.

Figure 11 Distribution of age of starters to full-time PhD courses



59. Figure 11 shows that the proportion of starters to full-time PhD courses aged 21 and under was in steady decline until 2004-05 and then it settled at four or five per cent for the duration of the period.

60. Table 17 shows how the mean age of starters to full-time PhD courses in 1996-97 and 2009-10 varies depending on the subject area of study. We see that those starting on full-time PhD courses in Education had the highest mean age in all three years: starters are, on average, around 35 years old. The lowest mean age was observed in the subject area of Chemistry where PhD starters are about 24 on average, however for the academic years 2007-08 and 2009-10 Physics full-time PhD starters had the same mean age.

Table 17 Mean age of starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	Change (in years) 1996-97 to 2009-10	Change (in years) 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	26.7	27.2	27.4	0.7	0.2
Subjects allied to medicine	27.4	27.5	28.0	0.7	0.6
Biological sciences	26.0	26.5	26.6	0.6	0.1
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	28.2	28.3	28.4	0.2	0.1
Chemistry	23.6	24.3	24.7	1.1	0.4
Physics	24.5	24.3	24.7	0.2	0.4
Other physical sciences	25.6	27.2	27.1	1.5	0.0
Mathematical sciences	25.4	25.6	25.5	0.1	-0.1
Computer science/librarianship/info science	27.0	28.1	27.7	0.7	-0.4
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	26.9	27.4	27.1	0.2	-0.3
Social/political/economic studies	28.7	30.3	30.0	1.3	-0.3
Law	29.4	29.9	29.9	0.5	0.0
Business/administrative studies	31.2	31.3	30.2	-1.0	-1.1
Languages	27.8	29.4	28.9	1.1	-0.5
Humanities	29.0	31.0	29.8	0.8	-1.2
Creative arts/design	30.0	31.9	32.9	2.9	1.0
Education	35.0	34.6	33.7	-1.3	-1.0
Unknown and combined subjects	28.9	26.9	26.5	-2.4	-0.5
Total	**27.1**	**28.0**	**27.8**	**0.7**	**-0.2**

Trend for PhD starters on a part-time course

61. Table 18 shows the trend for starters to part-time PhD courses by age.

Table 18 Starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by age group

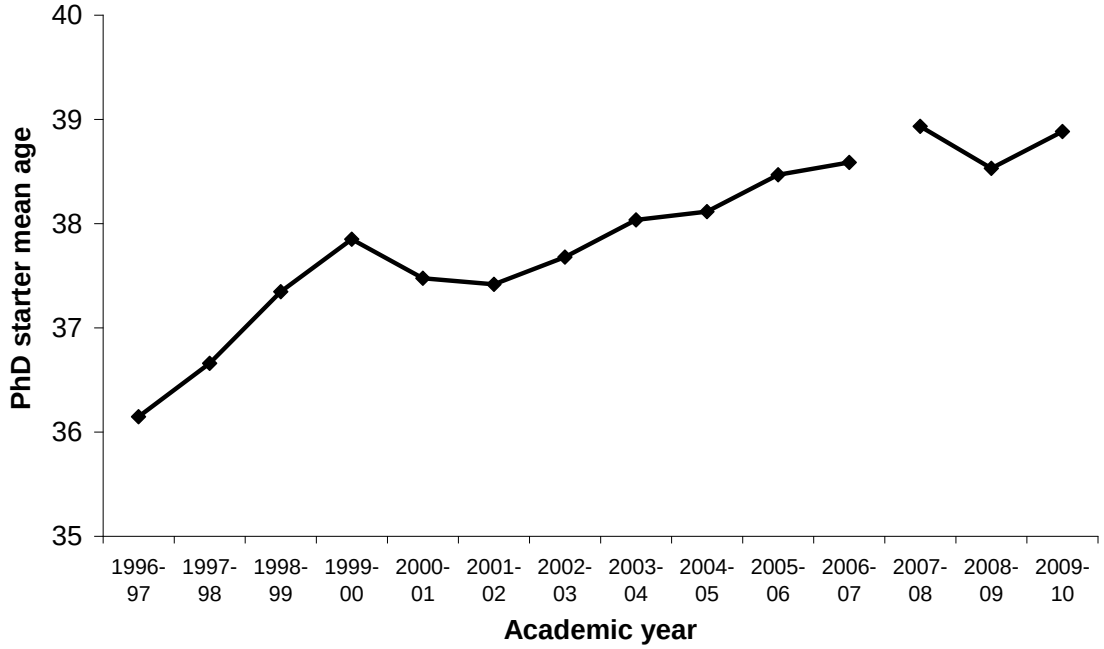
	Year			% Change	% Change
Age group	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	1996-97 to 2009-10	2007-08 to 2009-10
21 and under	50	25	10	#	#
22 or 23	245	120	150	-38%	24%
24 or 25	270	185	235	-12%	29%
26 or 27	280	290	265	-5%	-9%
28 and over	3,165	3,440	4,045	28%	18%
Total	**4,010**	**4,060**	**4,705**	**17%**	**16%**
Mean age	**36.1**	**38.9**	**38.9**		

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in one of the years and so percentage change is not reported.

62. Table 18 shows that there were declining numbers of starters to part-time PhD courses in the lower age brackets. For those 28 and over, the numbers were steady at around 3,250 until 2008-09 and 2009-10 when numbers increased to 3,770 and 4,045 respectively.

63. Figure 12 shows the mean age of starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10. We see that the mean age of starters to part-time PhD courses rose by almost two-and-a-half years between 1996-97 and 2006-07 and between 2007-08 and 2009-10 it stabilised at just under 39 years.

Figure 12 Mean age of starters to part-time PhD courses



Note: Horizontal axis crosses the vertical axis at 35 years rather than 0 years.

64. Table 19 shows how the mean age of starters to part-time PhD courses in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 varies depending on the subject area of study.

Table 19 Mean age of starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	Change (in years) 1996-97 to 2009-10	Change (in years) 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	32.0	32.2	32.1	0.2	0.0
Subjects allied to medicine	38.1	40.7	39.9	1.8	-0.8
Biological sciences	32.1	36.7	36.1	4.0	-0.6
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	32.8	#	#		
Chemistry	32.3	#	#		
Physics	32.5	#	#		
Other physical sciences	34.5	36.9	35.0	0.5	-1.9
Mathematical sciences	36.9	#	#		
Computer science/librarianship/info science	35.9	35.8	37.5	1.7	1.7
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	33.2	35.7	35.7	2.4	-0.1
Social/political/economic studies	36.8	39.2	39.8	3.0	0.5

Law	35.4	37.4	38.8	3.5	1.4
Business/administrative studies	37.6	41.2	40.3	2.8	-0.9
Languages	35.7	38.7	38.8	3.1	0.1
Humanities	39.1	44.2	43.4	4.4	-0.8
Creative arts/design	34.3	39.9	40.7	6.3	0.7
Education	41.9	43.1	42.4	0.5	-0.7
Unknown and combined subjects	38.0	37.5	40.0	2.1	2.5
Total	**36.1**	**38.9**	**38.9**	**2.7**	**0.0**

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in the year and subject combination, so the average was not calculated.

65. Table 19 shows that those starting on part-time PhD courses in Medicine and dentistry had the lowest mean age (around 32) in all three years. In 1996-97, those starting on Education part-time courses had the highest mean age, at 41.9 years. However, in 2007-08 and 2009-10, those starting Humanities part-time courses had the highest mean age, at 44.2 and 43.4 years respectively.

Ethnicity

Profile

66. Tables 20 and 21 show the percentage of full-time and part-time starters by ethnicity in 2009-10. Due to the differences between UK, EU and international starters in terms of ethnicity, we separately report the ethnicity profile of the full- and part-time starting cohorts, split by domicile.

Table 20 Full-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by ethnicity

Ethnicity	UK	Of starters	EU*	Of starters	International	Of starters
White	7,645	85%	1,760	95%	895	20%
Black or Black British	215	2%	10	0%	405	9%
Asian or Asian British	530	6%	20	1%	1,540	34%
Chinese	200	2%	5	0%	890	20%
Mixed and any other	405	4%	50	3%	830	18%
Sub-total	8,990	100%	1,845	100%	4,565	100%
Not known/not given	430		705		1,540	
Total	**9,420**		**2,550**		**6,105**	

*excludes those domiciled in the UK.

67. Table 20 shows that the majority of UK and EU-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses in 2009-10 were White (85 per cent and 95 per cent respectively). The equivalent proportion for those starters domiciled internationally was lower at 20 per cent.

Table 21 Part-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by ethnicity

Ethnicity	UK	Of starters	EU*	Of starters	International	Of starters
White	2,835	84%	380	95%	160	33%
Black or Black British	155	5%			75	16%
Asian or Asian British	240	7%	5	1%	110	22%
Chinese	35	1%			80	16%
Mixed and any other	115	3%	15	4%	60	12%
Sub-total	3,375	100%	400	100%	485	100%
Not known/not given	240		110		105	
Total	**3,615**		**510**		**590**	

* excludes those domiciled in the UK.

68. Table 21 is the equivalent to Table 20 but for starters to part-time PhD courses. It shows that, as with starters to full-time courses, the majority of UK and EU starters are reported as having a White ethnic background.

Trend for PhD starters on a full-time course

69. Table 22 shows the trend for starters to full-time PhD courses by ethnicity. For ease of interpretation, we focus on UK-domiciled students only.

Table 22 UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by ethnicity

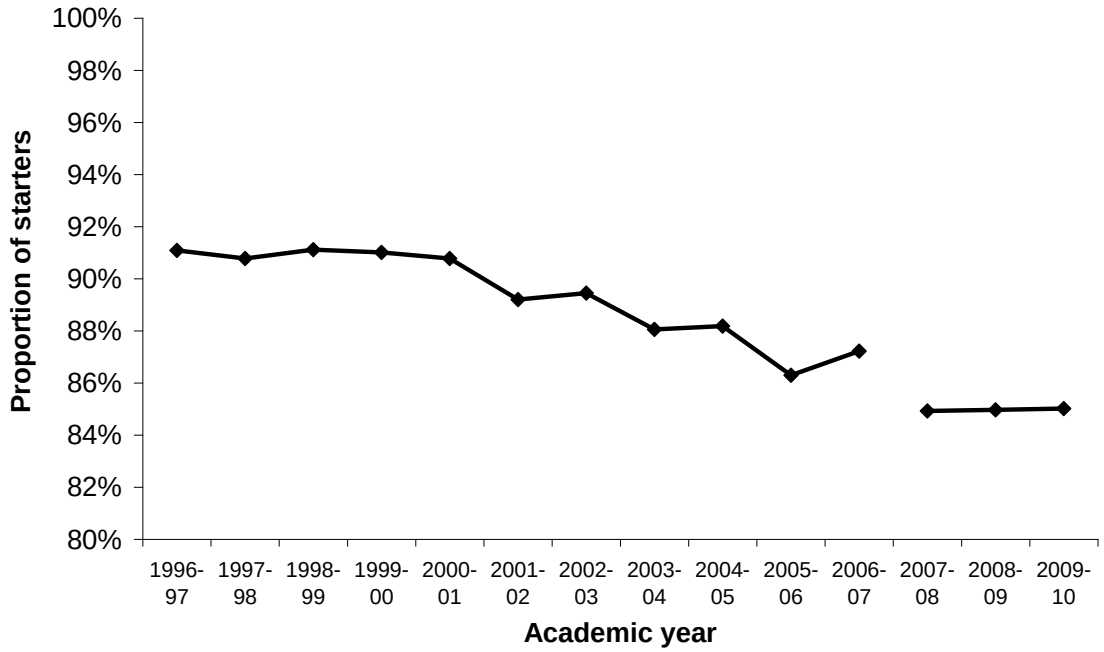
Ethnicity	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
White	3,955	6,235	7,645	93%	23%
Black or Black British	55	165	215	291%	29%
Asian or Asian British	190	430	530	176%	23%
Chinese	45	165	200	365%	20%
Mixed	100	345	405	312%	17%
Not known/not given	1,660	470	430	-74%	-9%
Total	**6,005**	**7,815**	**9,420**	**57%**	**21%**

70. Table 22 shows that the number of starters within each ethnic group increased. The number of students whose ethnicity is unknown or not given decreased; this may be due to improvements made in the collection and recording of these data and may partially account for the increases seen in the other ethnicities.

71. Figure 13 displays the trend in the proportion of UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses whose ethnicity is recorded as White, between 1996-97 and 2009-10. It shows that

between 1996-97 and 2006-07 there was a steady decline in the proportion of full-time starters with White ethnicity, however, between 2007-08 and 2009-10 the proportion has remained at around 85 per cent.

Figure 13 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses whose ethnicity is White



Notes: Excludes those with unknown ethnicity. Horizontal axis crosses the vertical axis at 80 per cent rather than 0 per cent.

72. Table 23 shows how the proportion in full-time starters whose ethnicity is reported as White varies by subject in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10.

Table 23 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 whose ethnicity was White, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	89%	79%	76%	-13%	-3%
Subjects allied to medicine	90%	79%	83%	-8%	3%
Biological sciences	93%	90%	89%	-4%	-1%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	#	#	90%		
Chemistry	92%	91%	87%	-5%	-3%
Physics	95%	90%	92%	-3%	1%
Other physical sciences	#	90%	92%		2%
Mathematical sciences	90%	86%	86%	-3%	1%

Computer science/librarianship/info science	91%	80%	83%	-8%	3%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	87%	76%	79%	-8%	3%
Social/political/economic studies	88%	86%	85%	-3%	-1%
Law	#	68%	66%		-2%
Business/administrative studies	83%	56%	74%	-9%	18%
Languages	93%	90%	85%	-8%	-5%
Humanities	95%	94%	93%	-3%	-1%
Creative arts/design	#	93%	93%		0%
Education	#	76%	85%		9%
Unknown and combined subjects	88%	83%	83%	-5%	0%
Total	**91%**	**85%**	**85%**	**-6%**	**0%**

Notes: Excludes those with unknown ethnicity. # shown when subject area had fewer than 10 students from a non-white ethnicity in either 1996-97, 2007-08 or 2009-10.

73. Table 23 shows that the proportion of starters in 2009-10 whose ethnicity was reported as White varies from 74 per cent in Business/administrative studies to 93 per cent in Humanities and Creative arts/design. The table also shows that in all subject areas with publishable data there was a decrease between 1996-97 and 2009-10 in the proportion who were White.

Trend for PhD starters on a part-time course

74. Table 24 shows the trend for starters to part-time PhD courses by ethnicity. As before, we focus on starters domiciled in the UK.

Table 24 UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by ethnicity

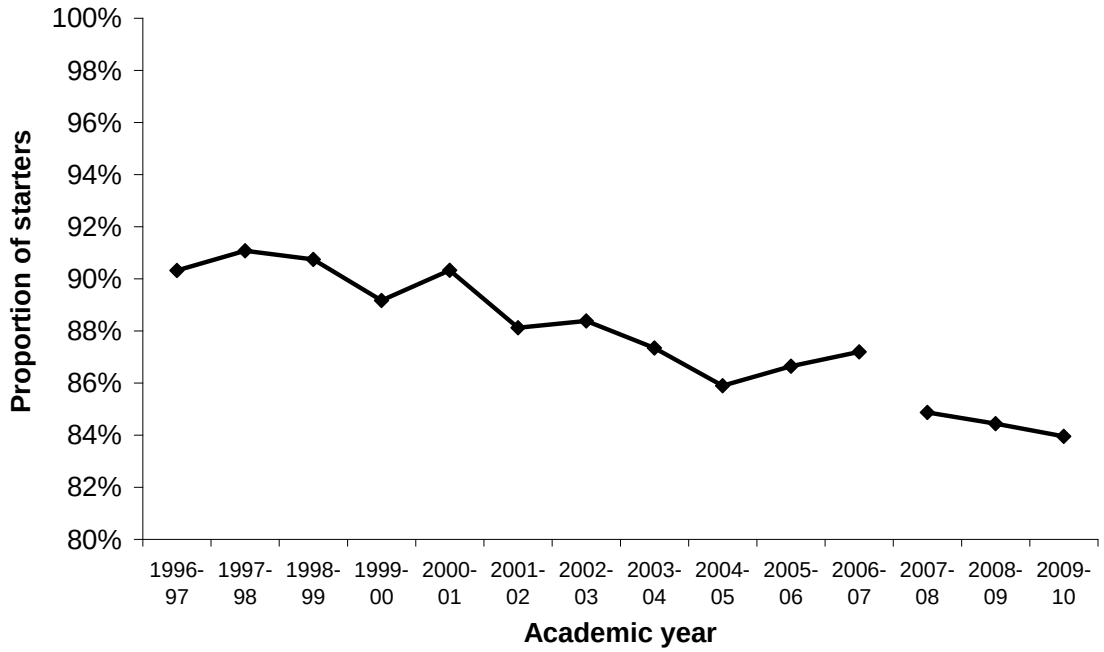
Ethnicity	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
White	2,125	2,385	2,835	33%	19%
Black or Black British	65	120	155	131%	30%
Asian or Asian British	85	175	240	186%	38%
Chinese	20	25	35	#	#
Mixed	55	105	115	105%	8%
Not known/not given	940	275	240	-75%	-12%
Total	**3,295**	**3,080**	**3,615**	**10%**	**17%**

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in one of the years and so percentage change is not reported.

75. Table 24 shows that, as with those starting full-time PhD courses, the number of starters to part-time PhD courses increased for all known ethnicities.

76. Figure 14 displays the trend in the proportion of part-time starters between 1996-97 and 2009-10 whose ethnicity was reported as White. It shows that the proportion of part-time starters whose ethnicity is reported as White declines in most years in the period 1996-97 to 2009-10.

Figure 14 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses whose ethnicity is White



Notes: Excludes those with unknown ethnicity. Horizontal axis crosses the vertical axis at 80 per cent rather than 0 per cent.

77. Table 25 shows how the proportion of part-time starters in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 whose ethnicity was reported as White varies by subject area of study.

Table 25 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 who were White, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	84%	67%	63%	-20%	-3%
Subjects allied to medicine	92%	84%	81%	-11%	-3%
Biological sciences	91%	85%	87%	-5%	1%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	#	#	#		
Chemistry	71%	#	#		
Physics	#	#	#		
Other physical sciences	#	#	#		
Mathematical sciences	#	#	#		

Computer science/librarianship/info science	85%	77%	#		
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	87%	80%	82%	-5%	2%
Social/political/economic studies	91%	84%	83%	-8%	-1%
Law	#	#	#		
Business/administrative studies	91%	84%	79%	-11%	-5%
Languages	89%	#	91%	1%	
Humanities	#	95%	96%		0%
Creative arts/design	#	93%	#		
Education	91%	90%	89%	-2%	-1%
Unknown and combined subjects	#	#	80%		
Total	**90%**	**85%**	**84%**	**-6%**	**-1%**

Notes: Excludes those with unknown ethnicity. # shown when subject area had fewer than 10 students from a non-white ethnicity in either 1996-97, 2007-08 or 2009-10.

78. Table 25 shows that Languages was the only subject area to show an increase, between 1996-97 and 2009-10, in the proportion of part-time starters from a White ethnicity; the proportion rose from 89 per cent in 1996-97 to 91 per cent in 2009-10.

Disability status

Profile

79. Table 26 shows the percentage of full-time and part-time starters by disability status in 2009-10.

Table 26 Full-time and part-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by disability status

Disability	Disabled Students' Allowance	Full-time	Of starters	Part-time	Of starters	Total	Of starters
	In receipt	195	1%	35	1%	230	1%
	Not in receipt	585	3%	150	3%	735	3%
	Not known	195	1%	55	1%	250	1%
Yes	**Sub-total**	**975**	**5%**	**240**	**5%**	**1,220**	**5%**
No	No known disability	17,100	95%	4,475	95%	21,575	95%
Total		**18,075**	**100%**	**4,715**	**100%**	**22,790**	**100%**

80. Table 26 shows that there were 1,220 PhD starters in 2009-10 who reported that they had a disability. This equates to around 5 per cent of the total population of PhD starters to full- and part-time courses.

Trend for PhD starters on a full-time course

81. Table 27 shows the trend for starters to full-time PhD courses by disability status. It shows that the number of starters on a full-time PhD who were reported as disabled increased from 235 in 1996-97 to 975 in 2009-10.

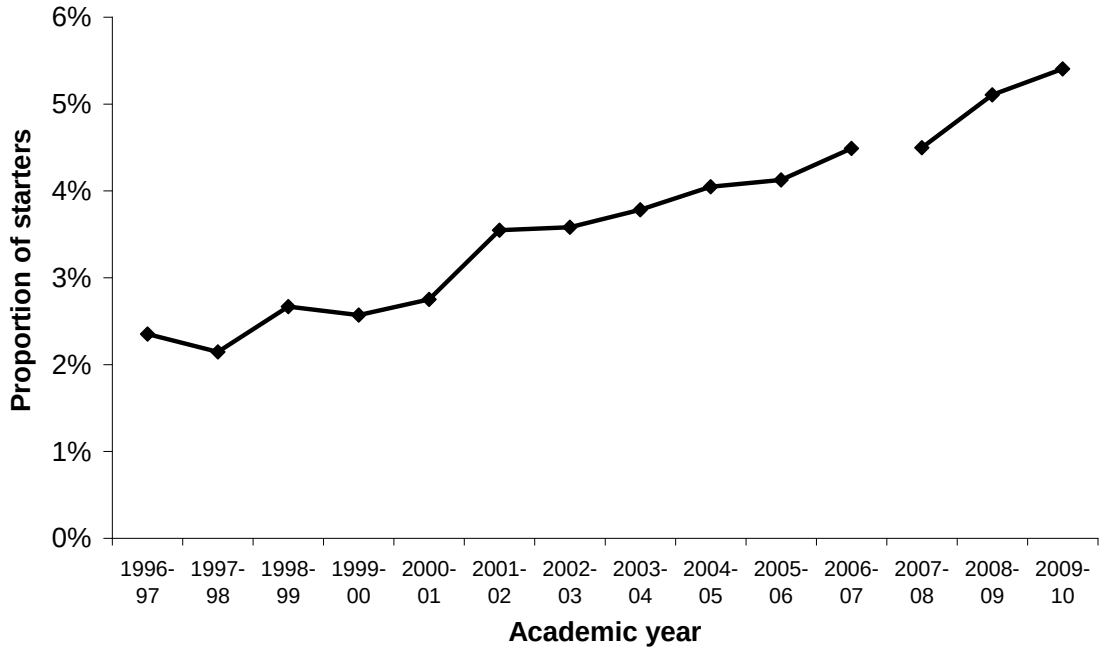
Table 27 Starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by disability status

Disability	Disabled Students' Allowance	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
	In receipt	30	150	195	#	30%
	Not in receipt	175	395	585	234%	49%
	Not known	30	175	195	#	12%
Yes	**Sub-total**	**235**	**720**	**975**	**316%**	**36%**
No	No known disability	9,755	15,250	17,100	75%	12%
Total		**9,990**	**15,965**	**18,075**	**81%**	**13%**

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in one of the years and so percentage change is not reported.

82. Figure 15 gives the trend between 1995-96 and 2009-10 in the proportion of starters to full-time PhD courses who are reported as having a disability. It shows that the growth has steadily grown over the period examined.

Figure 15 Proportion of starters to full-time PhD courses who are reported as having a disability



Notes: Excludes those with unknown disability.

83. Table 28 shows the proportion of full-time starters in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 who were reported as having a disability, in each subject area.

Table 28 Proportion of starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 who were reported to have a disability, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	2.3%	3.9%	4.7%	2.5%	0.8%
Subjects allied to medicine	#	5.2%	4.8%		-0.4%
Biological sciences	2.7%	5.0%	6.2%	3.6%	1.2%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	#	#	7.3%		
Chemistry	2.9%	3.9%	4.8%	1.9%	0.9%
Physics	#	5.9%	7.4%		1.5%
Other physical sciences	#	6.6%	6.7%		0.1%
Mathematical sciences	#	4.6%	4.0%		-0.5%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	#	3.7%	5.0%		1.3%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	2.0%	3.9%	4.4%	2.4%	0.5%
Social/political/economic studies	2.2%	4.6%	5.6%	3.4%	1.0%
Law	#	4.1%	3.3%		-0.8%

Business/administrative studies	2.8%	2.1%	2.5%	-0.4%	0.4%
Languages	1.6%	4.5%	5.9%	4.3%	1.4%
Humanities	4.4%	6.6%	7.4%	2.9%	0.8%
Creative arts/design	#	6.1%	7.0%		0.9%
Education	#	#	7.8%		
Unknown and combined subjects	#	3.3%	5.3%		2.0%
Total	**2.4%**	**4.5%**	**5.4%**	**3.1%**	**0.9%**

Note: Excludes those with unknown disability. # shown when subject area had fewer than 10 students returned as having a disability in either 1996-97, 2007-08 or 2009-10.

84. Table 28 shows increases between 1996-97 and 2009-10 in the proportion reported as having a disability in all subject areas with the exception of Business/administrative studies: the proportion decreased by 0.4 per cent from 2.8 to 2.5 per cent in this subject area.

Trend for PhD starters on a part-time course

85. Table 29 shows the trend for starters to part-time PhD courses by disability.

Table 29 Starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by disability status

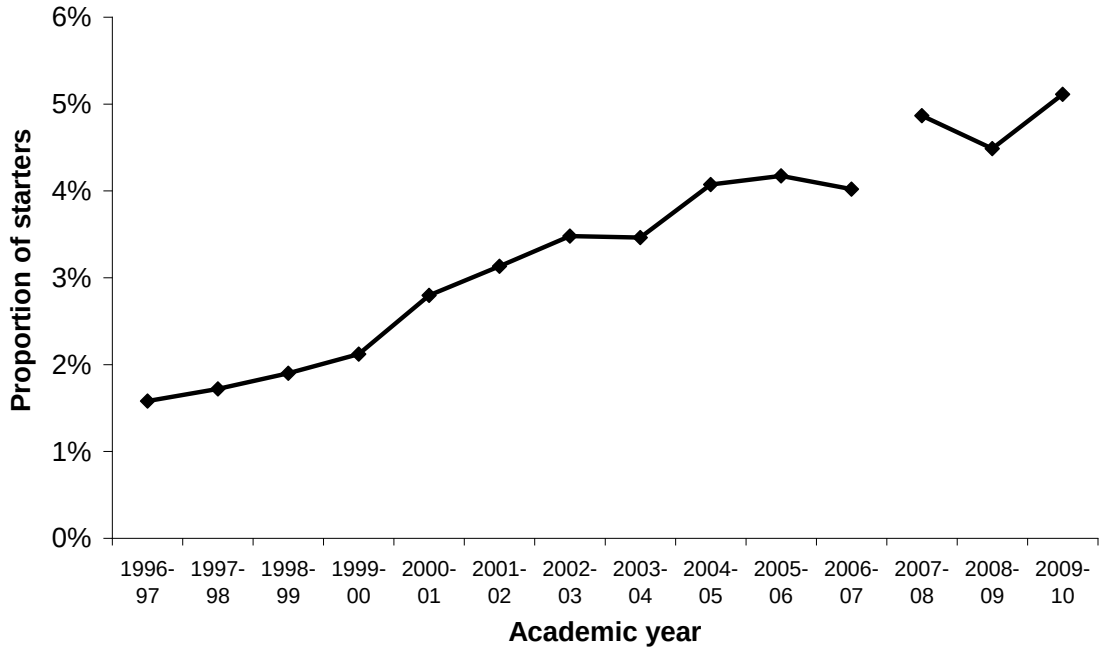
Disability	Disabled Students' Allowance	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
	In receipt	5	35	35	#	#
	Not in receipt	45	120	150	#	23%
	Not known	15	40	55	#	#
Yes	**Sub-total**	**65**	**200**	**240**	**277%**	**22%**
No	No known disability	3,990	3,870	4,475	12%	16%
Total		**4,055**	**4,070**	**4,715**	**16%**	**16%**

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in one of the years and so percentage change is not reported.

86. Table 29 shows that, as with those starting on full-time PhD courses, the number of starters to part-time PhD courses who were returned as having a disability increased between 1996-97 and 2009-10.

87. Figure 16 displays the trend in the proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 who were reported as having a disability. It shows relatively even growth across the whole period.

Figure 16 Proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses who were reported as having a disability



Notes: Excludes those with unknown disability.

88. Due to small numbers, Table 30 does not present starters reported as having a disability in respect to part-time PhD courses by subject area for the academic year 1996-97.

Table 30 Proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses in 2007-08 and 2009-10 who were reported to have a disability, by subject area

Subject	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	#	#	
Subjects allied to medicine	5.5%	3.7%	-1.7%
Biological sciences	4.6%	4.5%	-0.1%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	#	#	
Chemistry	#	#	
Physics	#	#	
Other physical sciences	#	#	
Mathematical sciences	#	#	
Computer science/librarianship/info science	#	#	
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	#	4.5%	
Social/political/economic studies	5.3%	9.2%	4.0%
Law	#	12.8%	
Business/administrative studies	5.4%	2.7%	-2.8%
Languages	4.8%	8.6%	3.8%

Humanities	7.2%	6.8%	-0.3%
Creative arts/design	7.2%	5.4%	-1.8%
Education	5.2%	5.2%	-0.1%
Unknown and combined subjects	#	#	
Total	**4.9%**	**5.1%**	**0.2%**

Note: Excludes those with unknown disability. # shown when subject area had fewer than 10 students returned as having a disability in either 1996-97, 2007-08 or 2009-10.

89. Table 30 shows that most subjects have seen a fall in the proportion of part-time PhD starters who were reported as having a disability.

Qualification in previous year

Profile

90. In Table 31 we show the distribution of starters to full-time PhD courses in 2009-10 by their qualifications prior to PhD entry. For further information on the grouping see Annex A.

91. We consider PhD starters domiciled in the UK, EU and international countries separately because we have more robust prior qualification information on those who gained their previous qualification from a UK HEI.

Table 31 Full-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by previous qualification

Year prior to entry/UK HEI	Qualification	UK	Of starters	EU	Of starters	International	Of starters
Qualification in year prior to entry from UK HEI	Masters	980	10%	205	8%	615	10%
	First degree (first class)	1,640	17%	115	5%	120	2%
	First degree (other)	1,165	12%	80	3%	80	1%
	Sub-total	**3,780**	**40%**	**400**	**16%**	**810**	**13%**
Qualification earlier or from non-UK HEI	Higher degree at UK HEI	2,775	29%	495	19%	1,490	24%
	First degree (class unknown)	2,240	24%	1,270	50%	2,795	46%
	Other or unknown	625	7%	385	15%	1,010	17%
	Sub-total	**5,640**	**60%**	**2,150**	**84%**	**5,295**	**87%**
Total		**9,420**	**100%**	**2,550**	**100%**	**6,105**	**100%**

Notes: EU category excludes those domiciled in the UK. Higher degree typically refers to a masters degree or a doctoral level qualification.

92. Table 31 shows that a higher proportion of UK-domiciled (40 per cent) starters to full-time PhD courses have a first degree or higher qualification from a UK HEI in the year prior to entry compared to EU-domiciled (16 per cent) and international (13 per cent) starters.

93. Table 31 also shows that for all domicile groups, around one in 10 students started a PhD course in the year directly after gaining a masters degree from a UK HEI. When considering all qualifications that are masters level or above (regardless of when they were gained), we see that 39 per cent of UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses had such qualifications in 2009-10 (that is, 10 per cent with a masters in the year prior to entry and 29 per cent who qualified with a higher degree in an earlier year). The equivalent proportions for EU and international starters in 2004-05 were 27 and 34 per cent respectively.

94. Table 32 is equivalent to Table 31 but for starters to part-time PhD courses in 2009-10.

Table 32 Part-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by previous qualification

Year prior to entry/UK HEI	Qualification	UK	Of PhD starters	EU	Of PhD starters	International	Of PhD starters
Qualification in year prior to entry from UK HEI	Masters	335	9%	30	6%	40	6%
	First degree (first class)	50	1%	5	1%	5	1%
	First degree (other)	40	1%	0	0%	0	0%
	Sub-total	**425**	**12%**	**35**	**7%**	**40**	**7%**
Qualification earlier or from non-UK HEI	Higher degree at UK HEI	1,830	51%	185	36%	145	25%
	First degree (class unknown)	860	24%	200	39%	285	49%
	Other or unknown	500	14%	90	17%	115	19%
	Sub-total	**3,195**	**88%**	**475**	**93%**	**545**	**93%**
Total		**3,615**	**100%**	**510**	**100%**	**590**	**100%**

***** excludes those domiciled in the UK.

95. Table 32 shows that 12 per cent of UK-domiciled part-time PhD starters in 2009-10 had gained a first degree qualification or higher from a UK HEI in 2008-09 compared to 7 per cent of EU and international domiciled starters. It also shows that for UK-domiciled starters, the proportion entering with a masters degree or higher (regardless of when the qualification was gained) is higher for part-time starters (60 per cent) compared to their full-time peers (39 per cent).

Trend for PhD starters on a full-time course

96. Table 33 shows the trend for starters to full-time PhD courses by their qualification in the year prior to entry. This may or may not be the highest qualification they have achieved. Here

(and for part-time starters) we focus on those who are from the UK because we have more complete information on their previous qualifications obtained.

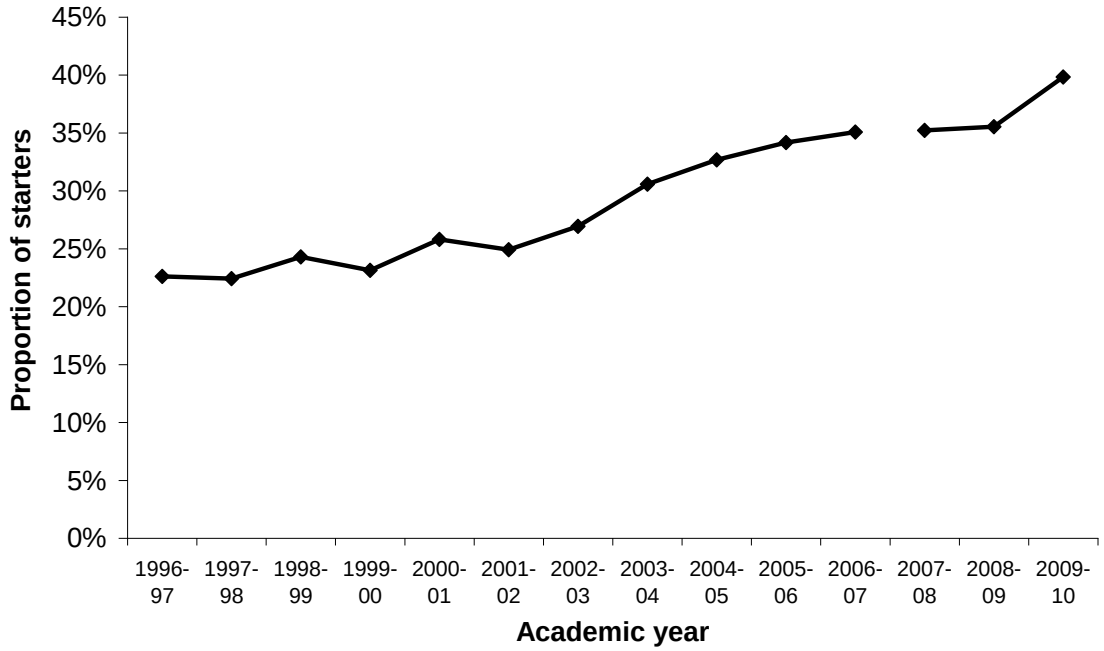
Table 33 UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by previous qualification

Year prior to entry/UK HEI	Qualification	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Qualification in year prior to entry from UK HEI	Masters	380	710	980	158%	38%
	First degree (first class)	1,185	1,380	1,640	38%	19%
	First degree (other)	1,395	965	1,165	-17%	20%
	Sub-total	**2,960**	**3,055**	**3,780**	**28%**	**24%**
Qualification earlier or from non-UK HEI	Higher degree at UK HEI	975	2,045	2,775	184%	36%
	First degree (class unknown)	1,470	2,065	2,240	52%	8%
	Other or unknown	600	650	625	5%	-4%
	Sub-total	**3,045**	**4,760**	**5,640**	**85%**	**19%**
Total		**6,005**	**7,815**	**9,420**	**57%**	**21%**

97. Table 33 shows that the number of full-time UK PhD starters who gained a masters degree or above (regardless of when they were gained) have consistently seen the greatest increases in numbers for both the periods considered.

98. Figure 17 displays the trend in the proportion of full-time UK starters who entered with a masters or higher (regardless of when it was gained) between 1996-97 and 2009-10.

Figure 17 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses who entered with a masters or higher between 1996-97 and 2009-10



99. We see from Figure 17 that there was a steady rise in the proportion of students who entered full-time PhD courses with a masters or higher between 1996-97 and 2002-03, which then accelerated between 2002-03 and 2009-10.

100. In Table 34 we show the proportion of starters to full-time PhD courses in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 who entered with a masters or higher, split by subject area of PhD study.

Table 34 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 who enter with a masters or higher, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	13%	27%	29%	16%	2%
Subjects allied to medicine	12%	33%	39%	27%	6%
Biological sciences	15%	28%	32%	17%	4%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	21%	34%	31%	10%	-2%
Chemistry	7%	11%	12%	5%	0%
Physics	15%	15%	14%	0%	-1%
Other physical sciences	21%	31%	38%	17%	7%
Mathematical sciences	15%	22%	27%	12%	5%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	34%	41%	37%	3%	-4%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	26%	29%	31%	5%	3%

Social/political/economic studies	42%	61%	69%	28%	8%
Law	34%	62%	66%	32%	3%
Business/administrative studies	46%	46%	70%	24%	24%
Languages	39%	67%	73%	34%	5%
Humanities	40%	65%	75%	35%	10%
Creative arts/design	49%	55%	69%	20%	15%
Education	46%	45%	66%	20%	21%
Unknown and combined subjects	18%	24%	33%	15%	9%
Total	**23%**	**35%**	**40%**	**17%**	**5%**

101. Table 34 shows that there is substantial variation between subject areas in the proportion who entered a PhD course with a masters or higher qualification. In 2009-10, 12 per cent of those starting on Chemistry PhD courses have a masters or higher qualification on entry, compared to 75 per cent of starters to Humanities courses in the same year.

102. Table 34 also shows that in all subject areas apart from Veterinary science, Physics and Computer science, the proportion of UK-domiciled starters who entered with a masters[6] or higher increased between 2007-08 and 2009-10.

Trend for starters on a part-time PhD

103. Table 35 shows the trend for starters to part-time PhD courses by their previous qualification (gained in the previous year or earlier).

[6] These would typically not include enhanced first degree qualifications such as MPhys or MMath.

Table 35 Starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by previous qualification

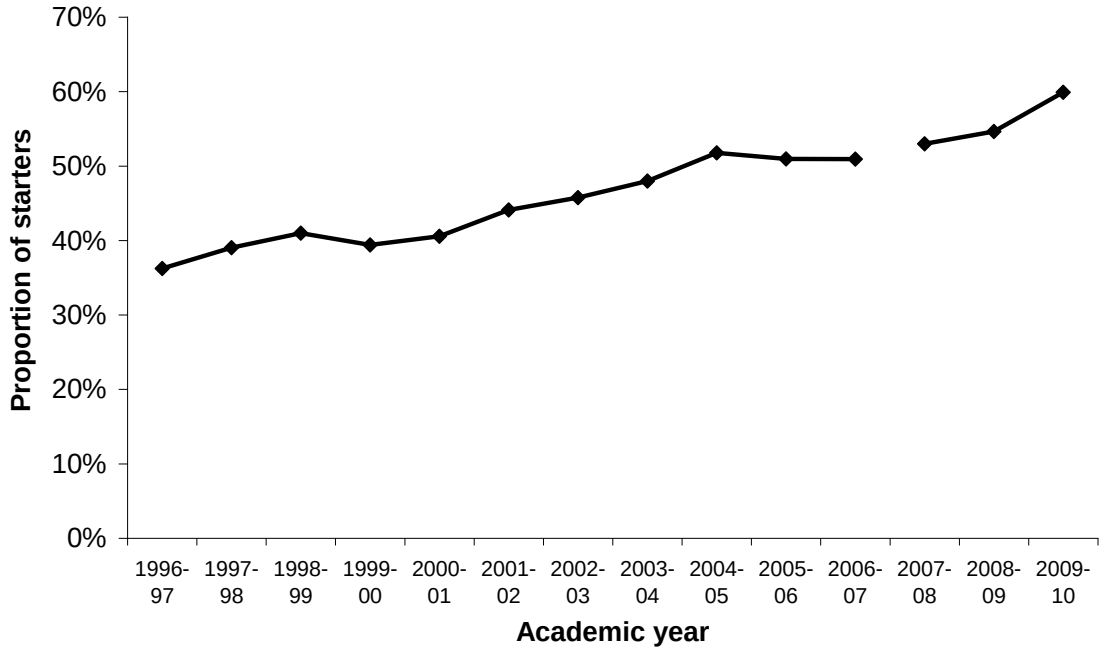
Year prior to entry/UK HEI	Qualification	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Qualification in year prior to entry from UK HEI	Masters	240	300	335	39%	12%
	First degree (first class)	75	30	50	-32%	#
	First degree (other)	195	55	40	-80%	#
	Sub-total	**505**	**385**	**425**	**-17%**	**10%**
Qualification earlier or from non-UK HEI	Higher degree at UK HEI	955	1,335	1,830	92%	37%
	First degree (class unknown)	1,045	765	860	-17%	13%
	Other or unknown	795	600	500	-37%	-17%
	Sub-total	**2,790**	**2,695**	**3,195**	**14%**	**18%**
Total		**3,295**	**3,080**	**3,615**	**10%**	**17%**

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in one of the years and so percentage change is not reported.

104. Table 35 shows that the number of part-time starters with a masters qualification awarded in the previous year increased by 39 per cent between 1996-97 and 2009-10 and the number with a higher degree from a UK HEI (regardless of when it was awarded) increased by 92 per cent. The number of starters with any other previous qualification declined over the same period; the largest decline (80 per cent) is observed among part-time starters who gained another class of first degree from a UK HEI in the year prior to PhD entry.

105. Figure 18 displays the trend in the proportion of part-time starters who entered PhD study with a masters or higher qualification between 1996-97 and 2009-10.

Figure 18 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses who enter with a masters or higher between 1996-97 and 2009-10



106. Figure 18 shows that the proportion of part-time starters who entered with a masters or higher steadily increased between 1996-97 and 2009-10. In 2009-10, 60 per cent of part-time starters entered with at least a masters qualification.

107. Table 36 shows the proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 who entered with a masters or higher qualification, split by subject area.

Table 36 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 with a masters or higher, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	13%	24%	28%	15%	4%
Subjects allied to medicine	32%	48%	60%	28%	12%
Biological sciences	23%	47%	57%	34%	10%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	33%	#	#		
Chemistry	#	#	#		
Physics	24%	#	#		
Other physical sciences	37%	61%	52%	15%	-9%
Mathematical sciences	55%	#	#		
Computer science/librarianship/info science	41%	54%	58%	18%	4%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	33%	48%	51%	18%	3%

Social/political/economic studies	42%	60%	67%	25%	6%
Law	34%	53%	77%	43%	23%
Business/administrative studies	50%	61%	68%	18%	7%
Languages	44%	65%	63%	19%	-2%
Humanities	42%	67%	70%	28%	4%
Creative arts/design	44%	56%	70%	25%	14%
Education	54%	68%	73%	20%	5%
Unknown and combined subjects	27%	36%	67%	40%	31%
Total	**36%**	**53%**	**60%**	**24%**	**7%**

Note: # shown when subject area had fewer than 10 students returned as having a masters or higher in either 1996-97, 2007-08 or 2009-10.

108. Table 36 shows, as with those starting on full-time PhD courses, that there is variation by PhD subject area in the proportion who enter a part-time course with a masters or higher qualification. In 2009-10 the highest proportion was observed among part-time starters to PhD courses in the subject area of Law (77 per cent). The lowest proportion (28 per cent) was observed in Medicine and dentistry.

109. Table 36 also shows that the proportion entering with a masters qualification or higher between 2007-08 and 2009-10 declined for part-time starters to PhD courses in Other physical sciences (from 61 per cent to 52 per cent) and Languages (from 65 per cent to 63 per cent). The proportion increased for all other subject areas with more than 10 PhD students in the academic years considered.

Trends in PhD starters by course attributes

Major source of tuition fees

Profile

110. In this section, we examine the major source of a PhD starter's tuition fees. Differences can be observed in the sources of tuition fees depending on a student's home domicile. For this reason we examine those domiciled in the UK, EU and international countries separately.

111. Table 37 shows the main source of tuition fees for starters to full-time PhD courses in 2009-10.

Table 37 Full-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by major source of tuition fees

Major source of tuition fees	UK	Of starters	EU*	Of starters	International	Of starters
Research Council	3,255	35%	500	20%	125	2%
Charity/British Academy	320	3%	145	6%	335	6%
Institution	2,415	26%	660	26%	1,205	20%
Government	665	7%	85	3%	145	2%
UK industry	270	3%	80	3%	245	4%
Overseas	125	1%	90	3%	1,645	27%
Other	615	7%	255	10%	410	7%
No financial backing	1,755	19%	735	29%	1,995	33%
Total	**9,420**	**100%**	**2,550**	**100%**	**6,105**	**100%**

***** excludes those from the UK.

112. Table 37 shows that the distribution of tuition fee sources differs depending on the starter's home domicile. For those domiciled in the UK, the largest group consisted of those whose main source of tuition fees came from the Research Councils; this source provided tuition fees for around a third of the starters to full-time courses. For EU and international students, the largest group were those that had no financial backing for their PhD tuition fee. For entrants from the UK and EU, the institution was the second most common source of funding for tuition fees, for entrants from international domiciles, overseas funding was the second most common source.

113. Table 38 shows the equivalent to Table 37 for starters to part-time PhD courses. It shows that for starters to part-time PhD courses from all three domiciles, the majority receive no financial backing with regards to tuition fees.

Table 38 Part-time PhD starters in 2009-10, by major source of tuition fees

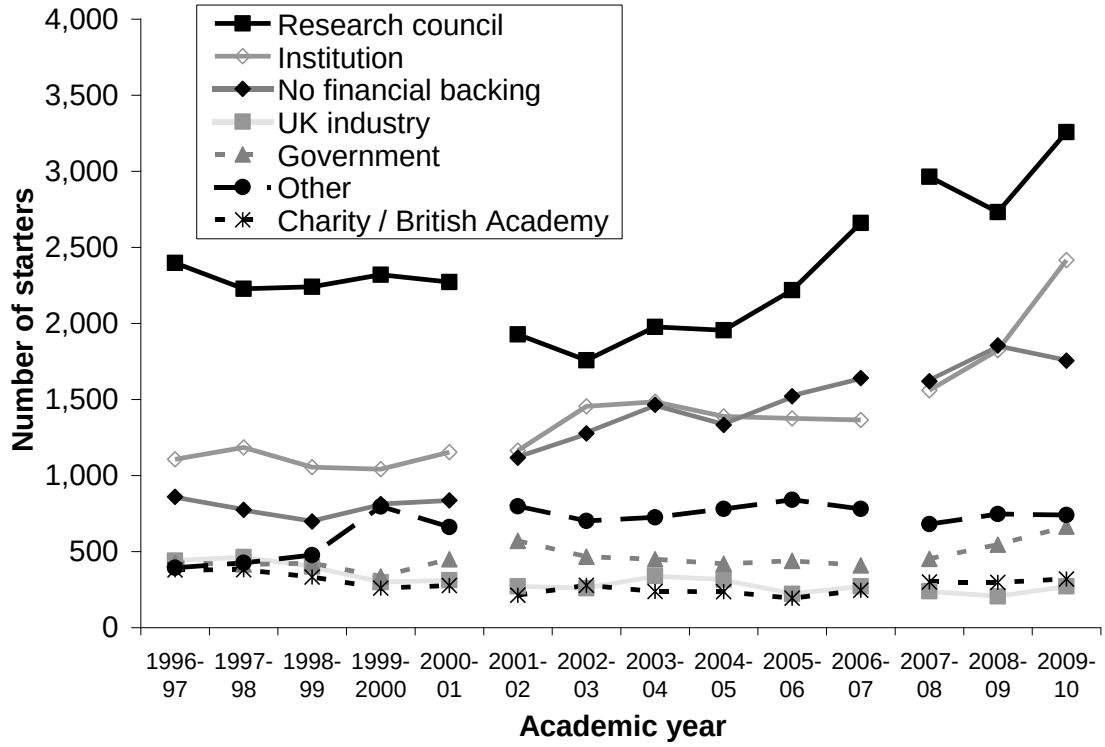
Major source of tuition fees	UK	Of starters	EU*	Of starters	International	Of starters
Institution	660	18%	55	10%	65	11%
Government	250	7%	30	6%	10	2%
UK industry	400	11%	25	5%	25	4%
Other	250	7%	40	7%	60	10%
No financial backing	2,055	57%	365	71%	430	73%
Total	**3,615**	**100%**	**510**	**100%**	**590**	**100%**

Notes: EU category excludes those domiciled in the UK. Sources with 100 starters or more, across country of domicile, are listed separately otherwise they are grouped with Other.

Trend for starters on a full-time PhD

114. Figure 19 displays the trend in UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 by their major source of tuition fees. For trend examinations, we restrict our analysis to those PhD starters who are UK-domiciled.

Figure 19 Number of UK-domiciled starters on a full-time PhD course, by major source of tuition fees



Notes: Sources with 100 starters or more, in all academic years, are listed separately otherwise they are grouped with Other.

115. Figure 19 shows that for some sources of a full-time student's tuition fees, there is a discontinuity in the data between 2000-01 and 2001-02. We believe this is due to changes in the way in which the major source of tuition fees were recorded rather than a practical change. Therefore, for the trend in major source of tuition fees for full-time students, the changes between 1996-97 and 2000-01 are reported separately to the changes between 2001-02 and 2006-07.

116. Table 39 shows the trend for starters to full-time PhD courses by their source of tuition fees.

Table 39 UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by major source of tuition fees

Major source of tuition fees	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Research Council	2,400	2,965	3,255	36%	10%
Charity/British Academy	380	300	320	-16%	6%
Institution	1,105	1,560	2,415	118%	55%
Government	425	450	665	56%	47%
UK industry	440	240	270	-38%	13%
Overseas	95	165	125	37%	-22%
Other	300	515	615	104%	19%
No financial backing	860	1,620	1,755	104%	8%
Total	**6,005**	**7,815**	**9,420**	**57%**	**21%**

117. Table 39 shows that the numbers of UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses whose major source of tuition fees were from one of the Research Councils increased by 10 per cent between 2007-08 and 2009-10.

118. Table 40 shows the proportion of starters to full-time PhD courses with no financial backing for tuition fees in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 split by the subject area of the PhD.

Table 40 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to full-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 with no financial backing, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	16%	25%	19%	3%	-6%
Subjects allied to medicine	11%	20%	18%	8%	-2%
Biological sciences	8%	16%	17%	9%	2%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	#	11%	10%		-1%
Chemistry	4%	6%	4%	1%	-2%
Physics	#	9%	5%		-4%
Other physical sciences	6%	12%	15%	9%	2%
Mathematical sciences	9%	8%	7%	-2%	-1%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	13%	24%	17%	4%	-7%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	8%	14%	13%	5%	-2%
Social/political/economic studies	31%	36%	32%	1%	-4%
Law	24%	45%	35%	11%	-10%
Business/administrative studies	30%	40%	30%	1%	-10%

Languages	35%	38%	38%	2%	0%
Humanities	38%	35%	32%	-6%	-3%
Creative arts/design	35%	34%	38%	3%	4%
Education	31%	34%	28%	-3%	-6%
Unknown and combined subjects	35%	8%	9%	-27%	0%
Total	**14%**	**21%**	**19%**	**4%**	**-2%**

Notes: # shown when subject area had fewer than 10 students returned as having no financial backing in either 1996-97, 2007-08 or 2009-10.

119. Table 40 shows that the proportion of UK-domiciled, full-time starters with no financial backing for tuition fees is lowest for science-based subjects (in all three years considered).

Trend for starters on a part-time PhD

120. Table 41 shows the trend for UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses by their major source of tuition fees.

Table 41 UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by major source of tuition fees

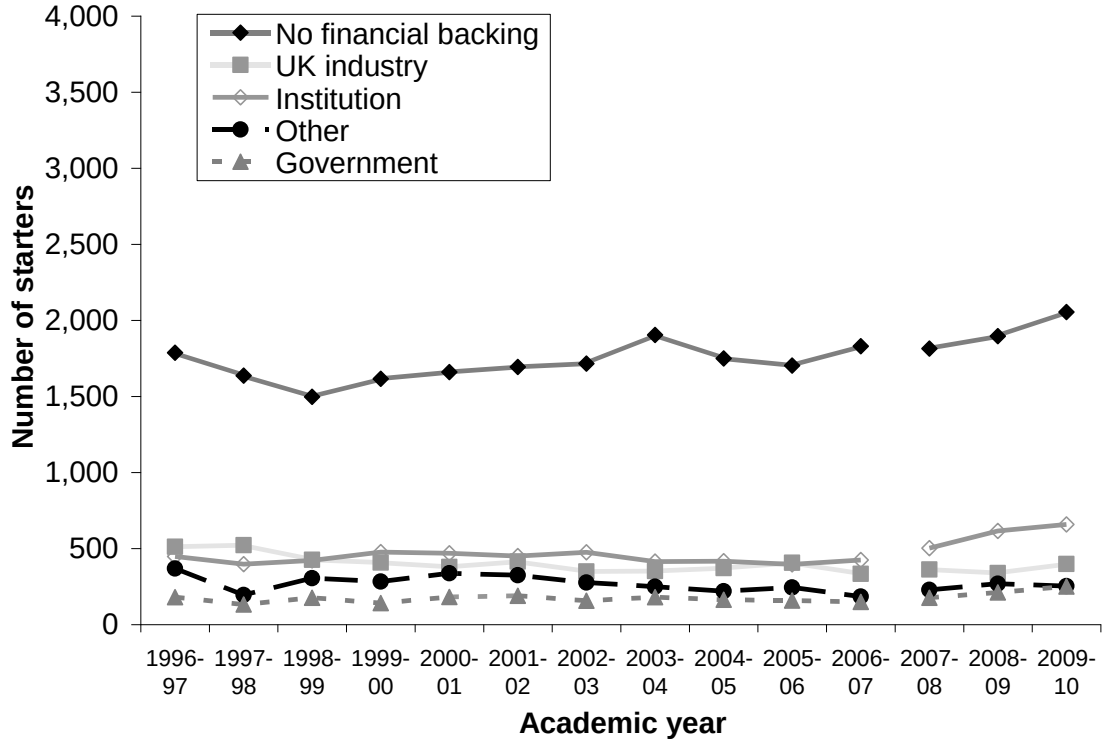
Major source of tuition fees	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Research Council	20	35	25	#	#
Charity/British Academy	20	30	25	#	#
Institution	450	500	660	47%	31%
Government	180	175	250	39%	43%
UK industry	510	360	400	-22%	10%
Overseas	10	5	5	#	#
Other	320	155	195	-38%	25%
No financial backing	1,785	1,815	2,055	15%	13%
Total	**3,295**	**3,080**	**3,615**	**10%**	**17%**

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in one of the years and so percentage change is not reported.

121. Table 41 shows that the number of UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses increased for most funding sources of tuition fees. The largest increase between 2007-08 and 2009-10 was observed among those receiving financial backing from Government, where numbers rose by 43 per cent (from 175 in 2007-08 to 250 in 2009-10).

122. Figure 20 displays the trend in UK-domiciled starters on part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10, by major source of tuition fees.

Figure 20 Number of UK-domiciled starters on a part-time PhD course, by major source of tuition fees



Note: Sources with 100 starters or more, in all academic years, are listed separately otherwise they are grouped with Other.

123. Figure 20 shows that the number of starters with no financial backing and backing from institutions for tuition fees has seen an overall increase during the period 1996-97 to 2009-10. The numbers of part-time starters with other sources of tuition fees are smaller and show less consistent behaviour.

124. Table 42 shows the proportion of starters to part-time PhD courses with no financial backing for tuition fees in 1996-97, 2007-08 and 2009-10 split by the subject area of the PhD.

Table 42 Proportion of UK-domiciled starters to part-time PhD courses between 1996-97 and 2009-10 with no financial backing for tuition fees, by subject area

Subject	1996-97	2007-08	2009-10	% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10	% Change 2007-08 to 2009-10
Medicine and dentistry	50%	49%	51%	1%	2%
Subjects allied to medicine	44%	47%	40%	-4%	-7%
Biological sciences	44%	56%	59%	14%	3%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	42%	50%	#		
Chemistry	46%	#	#		

Physics	54%	#	#		
Other physical sciences	54%	61%	70%	16%	9%
Mathematical sciences	39%	#	77%	37%	
Computer science/librarianship/info science	40%	69%	66%	26%	-3%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	35%	52%	44%	9%	-8%
Social/political/economic studies	65%	63%	57%	-8%	-6%
Law	79%	56%	67%	-12%	11%
Business/administrative studies	39%	48%	49%	10%	1%
Languages	78%	79%	73%	-5%	-6%
Humanities	79%	84%	75%	-4%	-9%
Creative arts/design	75%	64%	63%	-12%	-1%
Education	59%	59%	58%	0%	0%
Unknown and combined subjects	51%	74%	68%	17%	-6%
Total	**54%**	**59%**	**57%**	**3%**	**-2%**

Notes: # shown when subject area had fewer than 10 students returned as having no financial backing in either 1996-97, 2007-08 or 2009-10.

125. Table 42 shows that the lowest proportion of starters receiving no financial backing for tuition fees in 2009-10 was observed in the subject area of Subjects allied to medicine, where 40 per cent of starters to a part-time PhD had no financial backing in terms of tuition fee support. The highest proportion was among those starting on a part-time Mathematical sciences PhD course in 2009-10; approximately four out of five had no financial backing for tuition fees.

Annex A HESA student record data definitions

Initial starting cohort

1. The starting cohort for this report is made up of students who:

- commenced between 1 August and 31 July of the year in question (Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) field 26 COMDATE between dates specified)
- commenced study on a doctorate degree mainly by research, or masters degree mainly by research (Field 41 QUALAIM – codes '02' or '04' – for years prior to 2007-08 or Field COURSEAIM – codes 'D00' or 'L00' – for 2007-08 onwards). This could include some specialist doctoral degrees, such as the Doctor of Education (EdD) and the Doctor of Engineering (EngD)
- are not studying on a doctorate degree mainly by research, or masters degree mainly by research at any point in the year prior to commencement.

All conditions must be met to be included in the starting cohort.

Initial qualification aim

2. In 2006-07, HESA stopped collecting the qualification aim of students returned on the HESA record and, for the 2007-08 record, began collecting course aim[7]. HESA provided a recommended mapping from qualification aim to course aim, however this was not always a one-to-one mapping and institutions were allowed to code their students as they felt appropriate. In an attempt to provide continuity to the PGR time series, HEFCE checked the mapping provided by HESA against data for students not in their first year of study and found the HESA mapping to be satisfactory.

3. Further analysis of the HEFCE-derived mapping showed that some institutions changed their reporting procedures during the transition from qualification aim to course aim. Table A1 gives an example of a change in reporting behaviour which would result in a discontinuity in the time series between 2006-07 and 2007-08.

[7] See HESA web-site for definitions of COURSEAIM (www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/component/option,com_studrec/task,show_file/Itemid,233/mnl,07051/href,a%5E_%5ECOURSEAIM.html/) and QUALAIM (www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_collns&task=show_manuals&Itemid=233&r=06012&f=041).

Table A1 Example of a mapping which causes the time series to be disrupted

Mapping for students not in the first year of study in 2007-08			Mapping for students in their first year of study in 2007-08		
Qualification aim (2006-07 or earlier)	**Mapping**	**Course aim (2007-08 or later)**	**Qualification aim (2006-07 or earlier)**	**Mapping**	**Course aim (2007-08 or later)**
Doctorate degree mainly by research	→	Doctorate degree obtained primarily through advanced supervised research written up as a thesis/dissertation	Doctorate degree mainly by research	→	Doctorate degree obtained primarily through advanced supervised research written up as a thesis/dissertation
Masters degree mainly by research	→	Masters degree obtained primarily through advanced supervised research written up as a thesis/dissertation	Masters degree mainly by research	→	Masters degree obtained primarily through advanced supervised research written up as a thesis/dissertation

4. Table A1 shows that for students not in their first year of study, the mapping used is as recommended by HESA. However, for students in their first year of postgraduate research study there were two groups of students prior to 2007-08 (those on a doctorate degree and those on a masters degree transferring to a doctorate degree) and only one group of doctoral degree students for 2007-08 onwards.

5. It is not possible to derive an accurate mapping for the behaviour of these institutions, so, rather than exclude them from the analysis, we have indicated that there is a break in the time series between 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Mode

6. A student's mode in each year is defined by HESA field 70 (MODE) and is allocated as follows:

a. Full-time/sandwich/writing up (FT)

- '01' Full-time according to funding council definitions
- '02' Other full-time
- '11' Full-time course/programme
- '21' Sandwich (thick)

- ‘22’ Sandwich (thin)
- ‘23’ Sandwich (thick) according to funding council definitions
- ‘24’ Sandwich (thin) according to funding council definitions
- ‘25’ Other sandwich course/programme
- ‘43’ Writing up – previously full-time
- ‘51’ Sabbatical
- ‘52’ Optional year-out – study related
- ‘53’ Compulsory year-out – study related
- ‘63’ Dormant – previously full-time.

b. Part-time/Writing up (PT)

- ‘31’ Part-time
- ‘38’ Structured part-time (institutions in Scotland)
- ‘39’ Other part-time (institutions in Scotland)
- ‘44’ Writing up – previously part-time
- ‘64’ Dormant – previously part-time.

Age

7. A student’s age is calculated on 1 August for the year in question.

Qualification in previous year

8. The previous qualification grouping is calculated in two stages:

a. Students whose HESA record can be found in the previous year’s data are grouped into three typical qualification groups: Masters; First degree (first class); and First degree (other class).

b. Students with non-typical qualifications and those who cannot be found at a UK HEI in the previous year are grouped into a further three qualification groups: Higher degree at UK HEI, which includes students with a qualification at masters level or above from a UK HEI; First degree (class unknown), which includes students with a first degree from a UK HEI or any graduates from an EU or other overseas institution; Other or unknown.

Source of funding

9. The student’s source of funding is derived from HESA field MSTUFEE (field 68) and is as follows:

a. Research Council

- ‘11’ Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council
- ‘12’ Medical Research Council
- ‘13’ Natural Environmental Research Council

- ‘14’ Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council
- ‘15’ Economic & Social Research Council
- ‘16’ Particle Physics & Astronomy Research Council
- ‘17’ Arts & Humanities Research Council
- ‘19’ Research Council, not specified.

b. Charity/British Academy

- ‘08’ British Academy
- ‘21’ Charitable foundation
- ‘22’ International agency.

c. Institution

- ‘05’ Institutional waiver of support costs
- ‘07’ Fee waiver under government unemployed students scheme
- ‘98’ No fees.

d. UK industry

- ‘61’ UK industry/commerce
- ‘81’ Student’s employer.

e. Government

- ‘02’ Award assessed by English or Welsh Local Education Authority (LEA) and paid in full by LEA or the Student Loans Company
- ‘03’ Paid in full by Student Awards Agency for Scotland
- ‘04’ Paid in full by the Department for Employment and Learning (in Northern Ireland)
- ‘31’ Department of Health/regional health authority/Scottish Office home and health department
- ‘32’ Department of Social Services
- ‘33’ Department for Education and Skills
- ‘34’ Other HM Government departments/public bodies
- ‘35’ Scholarship of HM forces
- ‘36’ Scottish Enterprise/Highlands and Islands Enterprise/Training Enterprise Council/Local Enterprise Company
- ‘37’ LEA training grants scheme
- ‘38’ Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- ‘39’ Scottish Local Authority.

f. No financial backing

- ‘01’ No award or financial backing.

g. Overseas

- ‘41’ EU commission
- ‘42’ Overseas student award from HM Government/British Council
- ‘43’ Overseas government
- ‘44’ Overseas Development Administration
- ‘45’ Overseas institution
- ‘46’ Overseas industry or commerce
- ‘47’ Other overseas funding
- ‘48’ Other overseas – repayable loan.

h. Other.

i. Any other code.

Subject

10. The student’s subject group when grouped by science/non-science is as follows:

a. Science

- Medicine and dentistry
- Subjects allied to medicine
- Biological sciences
- Veterinary science/agriculture/related subjects
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Other physical sciences
- Mathematical sciences
- Computer science/librarianship/info science.

b. Non-science

- Engineering/technology/building/architecture
- Social/political/economic studies
- Law
- Business/administrative studies
- Languages
- Humanities
- Creative arts/design

- Education
- Unknown and combined subjects.

Annex B Additional table for subject area by domicile

1. Table B1 shows the number of PhD starters to full-time PhD courses, split by subject area of study and the domicile of the starter in 2009-10. This relates to Table 8 in the main report but gives the percentage change for the whole time period, 1996-97 to 2009-10.

Table B1 Number of PhD starters to full-time courses, by subject area and domicile

	UK		EU		International	
Subject	**2009-10**	**% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10**	**2009-10**	**% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10**	**2009-10**	**% Change 1996-97 to 2009-10**
Medicine and dentistry	795	98%	155	#	300	259%
Subjects allied to medicine	505	82%	95	#	250	152%
Biological sciences	1,685	46%	355	137%	470	97%
Veterinary sciences/agriculture/related subjects	135	6%	25	#	85	-5%
Chemistry	675	-5%	130	82%	220	130%
Physics	535	92%	150	139%	155	81%
Other physical sciences	515	97%	105	#	185	165%
Mathematical sciences	255	20%	95	#	170	79%
Computer science/librarianship/info science	405	133%	155	#	405	237%
Engineering/technology/building/architecture	1,265	39%	425	109%	1,345	103%
Social/political/economic studies	610	70%	260	81%	620	94%
Law	110	79%	40	#	180	129%
Business/administrative studies	245	39%	105	#	545	224%
Languages	510	56%	180	52%	325	46%

Humanities	500	59%	115	87%	325	71%
Creative arts/design	280	341%	60	#	120	#
Education	145	72%	40	#	205	43%
Unknown and combined subjects	255	134%	65	#	190	#
Total	9,420	57%	2,550	122%	6,105	115%

Note: # indicates that there were fewer than 50 starters in one of the years and so percentage change is not reported.

2. Due to small numbers, this table is not produced for part-time PhD starters.

List of abbreviations

HEFCE Higher Education Funding Council for England

HEI Higher education institution

HESA Higher Education Statistics Agency

LEA Local Education Authority